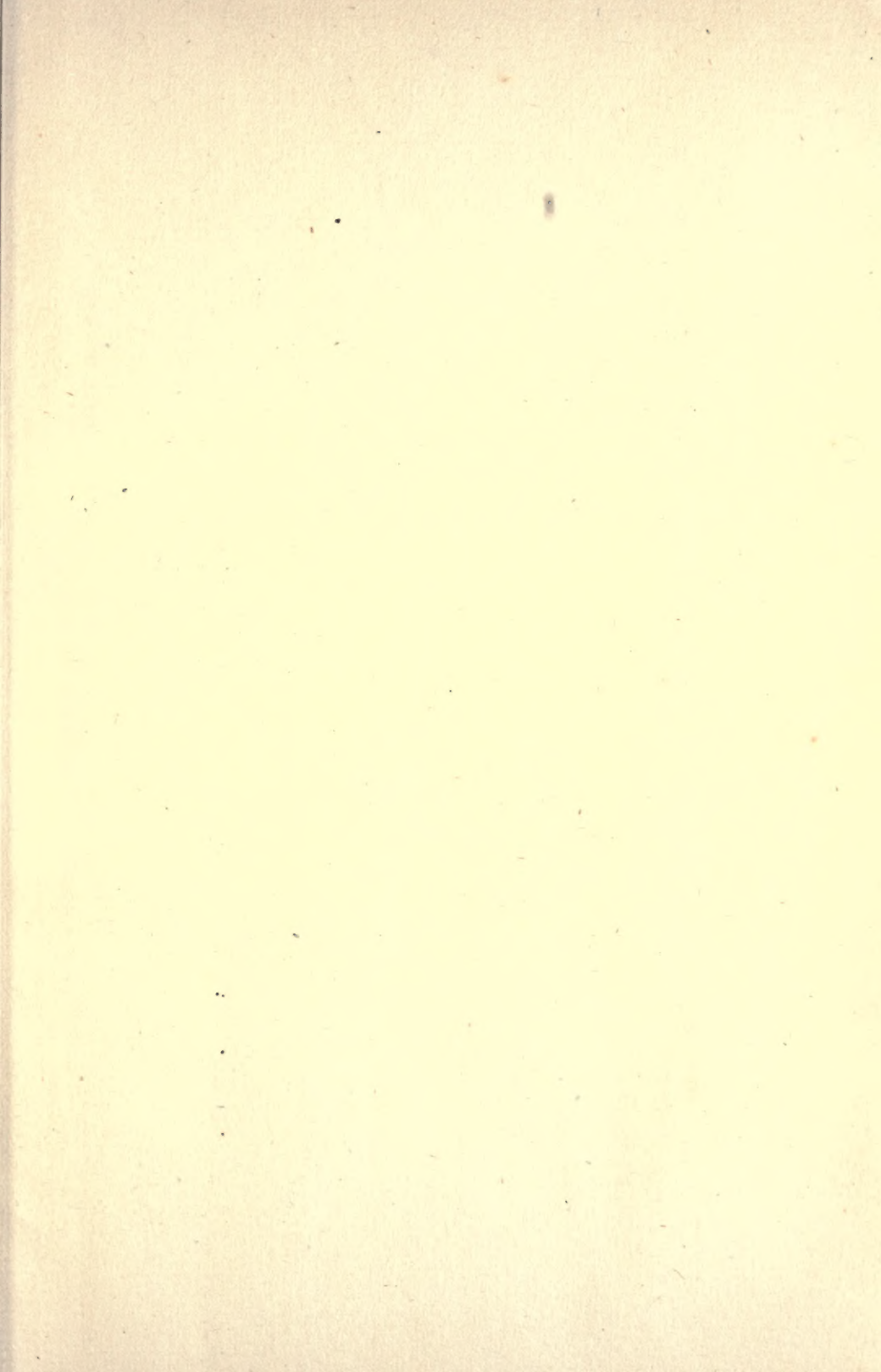


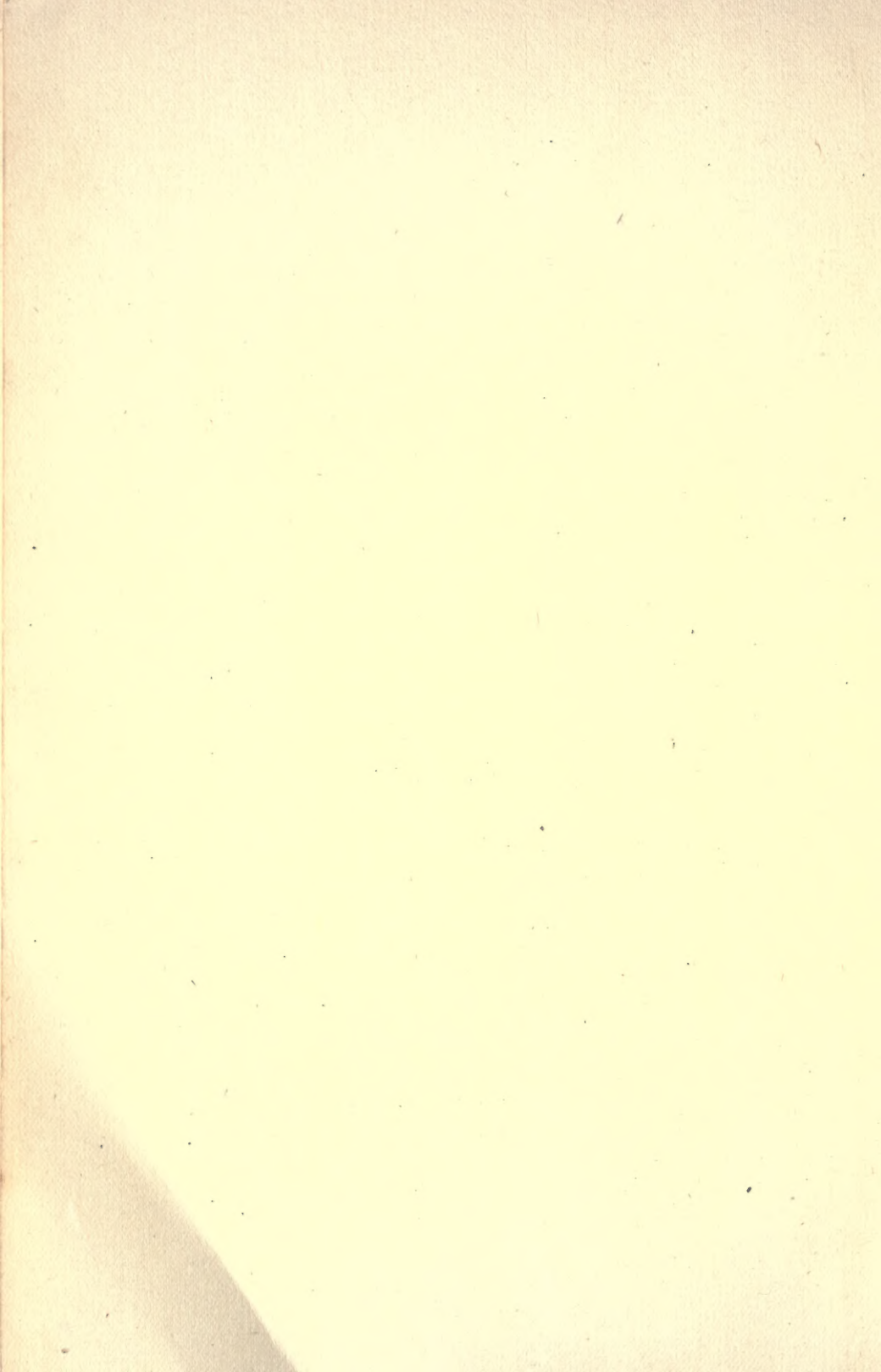
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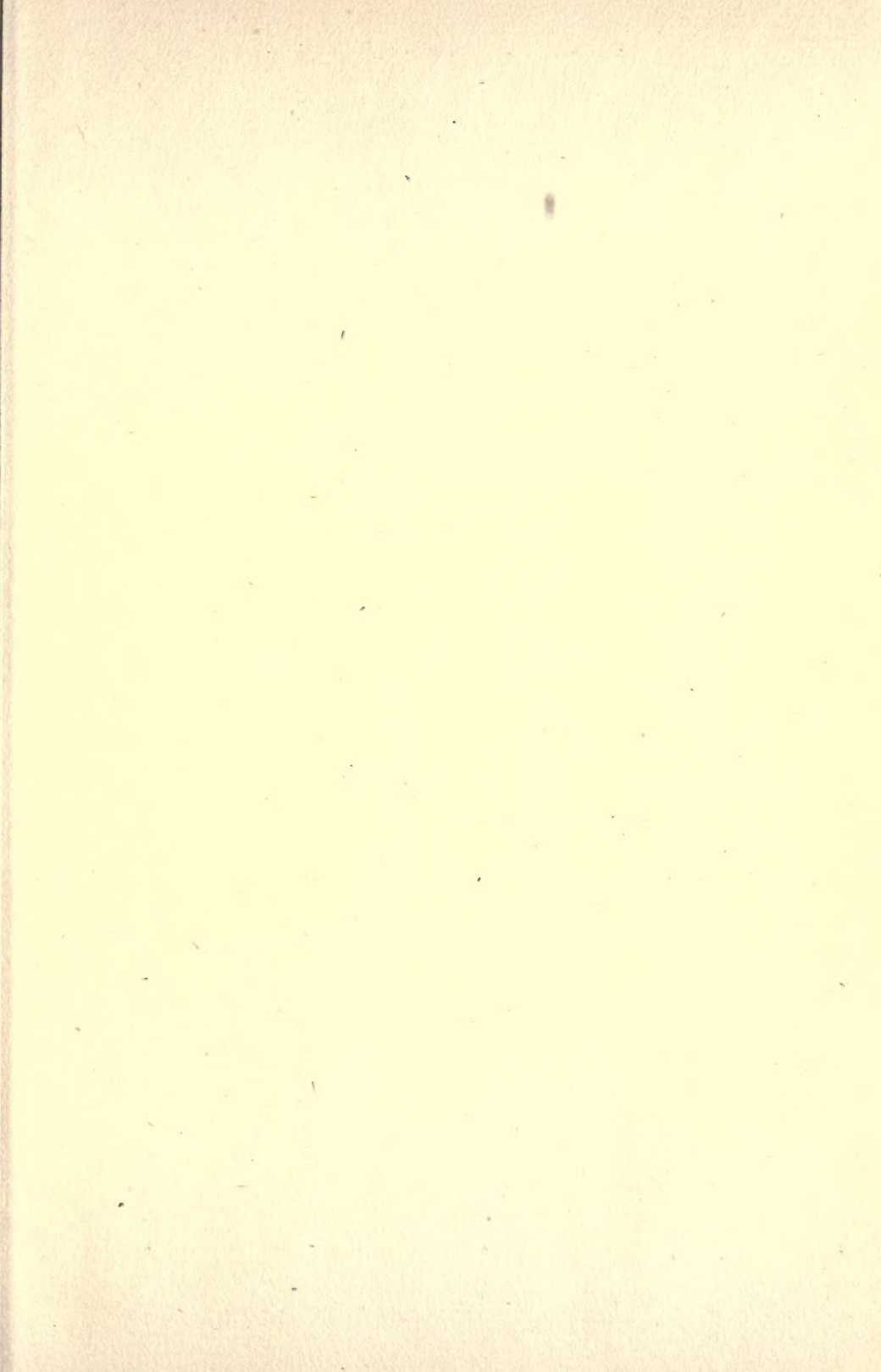
HISTORY  
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# HISTORY

OF THE

## Evangelical Association.

By R. YEAKEL.

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Vol. I.  
—1750—1850.—

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J. H. LAMB, Agent,  
CLEVELAND, O.

1909.

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## PREFACE.

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The history of the Christian Church is next to the Holy Scriptures, one of the most instructive and useful studies, and although the writing of such history is a very difficult and responsible task, yet it is also a highly interesting one. The same is true with regard to the history of any branch of the Church. It is profoundly interesting to observe and record the conflict between light and darkness—the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan—and to observe the vicissitudes of the battle whilst we are prophetically assured of the final, glorious victory of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the Church.

The responsibility of the Church historian is also very great ; he must portray the progress of this conflict and the developments involved in the course of the militant Church life correctly, impartially and as completely as possible, for the history of an ecclesiastical communion is to her a great and sacred treasure. By it she may learn to understand her calling from the historical standpoint, she may also discover her faults in the past and amend them in the future, and thus her history will have a molding and determining influence upon her denominational character in the future. Hence, the worst and most harmful of falsifiers would be those, who falsify a Church history.

But who comprehends and appreciates the labor and patience required to discover all the sources and scattered fragments of such a history and arrange them, both logically and chronologically, in such a manner that the whole shall constitute an appreciable and comprehensible presentation which will enable the reader to enter into it, and view it not only in its outward but also in its inward course ?

This applies with especial emphasis to the compilation of the history of the Evangelical Association. This history is more particularly of great importance to the present rising generation, and perhaps still more to succeeding generations, who are separated on account of age from the fathers and mothers of this "Israel," who have nearly all of them entered into the rest that remaineth for the people of God, whilst the remaining few are ready "to put off this tabernacle" of clay. And in this age of commotion when time and business developments fly onward with almost

cyclonic velocity, the traditions of the Association would soon be irretrievably lost, unless they are preserved in the archives of a faithfully written history.

Thus it is seen that without a written history the Association would finally become uncertain concerning herself, and it would soon become impossible to comply with the biblical exhortation: "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn and the pit whence ye are digged." (Isaiah 51, 1.) The recollections of "the wonderful works of God" which He has wrought for this Church and the inspiration produced by them, as well as the adoration due unto Him who is the author of all good, would cease, which would be an incalculable and irretrievable loss.

Already many years ago the fathers in the Church realized the pressing need and the importance of such a history, hence it was a subject of earnest discussion in the General Conference in 1843, which resulted in the appointment of John Dreisbach as historian, who was instructed with the assistance of the presiding elders of the Annual Conferences and the Bishops to begin such a compilation, but as Mr. Dreisbach received very little help—there being no plan nor concerted action for the collection of historical matter—he could give only a summary review of this history up to the year 1830, which he produced chiefly from his own recollections and observations. The General Conference in 1847 then appointed Adam Ettinger to continue the work, but he soon afterward withdrew from the Church.

The following General Conference then instructed the editors of the Church papers to continue the compilation of the history thus begun, which, however, on account of the frequent change of editors, was not carried out. In the Spring of 1854 the then West Pa. Annual Conference requested William W. Orwig to undertake the compilation of this work, with the consent of the other Conferences. Bro. Orwig then entered upon this task in the month of July 1854, and, in about two and a half years, completed the first volume, comprising the period from 1800 until 1845. In this work the historical compilation made by Dreisbach, and the *Christliche Botschafter* from the year 1836 onward, proved excellent helps, yet Bro. Orwig found the task to be a very difficult one. On account of the great lack of records, especially of the earlier times of the Association this history remained in many respects defective, and the need of revision and improvement made itself felt, which fact Bro. Orwig himself—

especially in his latter years—acknowledged both privately and publicly. Hence, the General Conference of 1875 appointed the then Bishop R. Dubs to undertake this revision, and at its next session (1879), this appointment was renewed; but Dubs found it impossible to attend to this work on account of the multiplicity of official labors. Thus the General Conference of 1887 found it necessary to adopt a peremptory resolution that the revision of the first volume and the compilation of a second volume be at once undertaken and that the Board of Publication appoint some one to this work. This Board then complied with this instruction by unanimously adopting the following resolution:

“Resolved, that Reuben Yeakel be hereby appointed to revise the first volume of the history of the Evangelical Association, and to collect the further material for said history and write a second volume.”

This appointment came to me quite unexpectedly, and I found myself entirely unprepared for the task. Upon a closer inspection of this work it soon became evident, that a revision of the first volume would necessarily involve also a re-arrangement of its plan. The volume to be revised commences with the year 1800 without presenting the preliminary history in which lay hid the historic conditions which caused the rise of the Evangelical Association. This lack had to be met in the revision. For this reason this volume begins about fifty years earlier and reaches in several respects still further back in order clearly to trace the historical tendencies toward the rise of such a movement. Moreover, the arrangement of Bro. Orwig's book in sections and chapters, from Conference to Conference and from one General Conference to another, was too mechanical and arbitrary; these intersections were frequently inadmissible because they failed to properly set forth the epoch making changes that occurred in the development of the Association. By the introduction of periods into this work, the correction of this fault, and thus also the revision of the plan of the book has been essayed. And in order to bring into proper prominence the more important details of the history, and give proper recognition of their value, short subdivisions or paragraphs with suitable captions have been introduced. Thereby the antiquated and almost useless custom of having chapters became superfluous.

I have introduced many citations from Orwig's book, and whenever it was suitable I gave him proper credit, remembering my appointment did not prescribe a total re-arrangement and re-writing but rather a “revision”

of the volume, hence the reader may notice some indications of Bro. Orwig's style even where no footnotes could be introduced. This was due to the esteemed author of the first volume of our Church History.

The following requirements are foundational to the existence and history of the Evangelical Association.

1. The clear proof that the existence of the Evangelical Association is historically justified—i. e. that moral and ecclesiastical conditions and circumstances required her rise and existence.

2. That Divine Providence and guidance brought her into existence and hence she is the work of God.

3. That her Church government is a legitimate one. To this belongs pre-eminently the proof that the ordination and authorization of her ministry, and hence also her Church government is a Scriptural one, which has its confirmation from Christ, the Head of the Church, and consequently that the Evangelical Association stands in an essential union with Christ and the General Christian Church on earth.

I do not hesitate to assert that this first volume of our history furnishes these required proofs.

As our knowledge here on earth is "in part" only, so also is necessarily our work, and hence this book will have its imperfections. A perfect ideal could not be attained under the circumstances. But no effort has been spared; many late night-hours have been employed, and many prayers were sent up to the Head of the Church for His help and for His permanent blessing upon this difficult labor. We now present this volume to our esteemed readers, hoping that it may prove to them a rich blessing in the furtherance of the knowledge of the wonderful ways of Providence and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

R. Y.

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# HISTORY

## OF THE

### EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION.

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#### PRELIMINARY.

**E**very tree has its roots, and everything in the world has its originating cause, hence also its preliminary history. Thus every movement and event in the Church of Christ on earth also has its previous, often hidden causes, which frequently extend back into the remote past. This fact does not reflect unfavorably upon divine Providence, but rather indicates the governing and overruling hand of Him "who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will." (Ephesians 1, 11.)

One of the most important features of written history is the inquiry into these causes and their portrayal in a clear light. This applies also in a high degree to the History of the Evangelical Association. Whosoever desires to paint a correct historical picture of this Church must first present the historical background in order to produce the picture itself correctly and clearly.

Guided by this principle we step back into the past and begin this history in the middle of the eighteenth century — about the years A. D. 1750–60, the decade in which JACOB ALBRIGHT, whom God was pleased to choose as the founder of this Church, was born, — fifty years before the beginning of the organization of the Evangelical Association.

As the Evangelical Association took its rise in the chiefly German counties of Pennsylvania, situated east of the Allegheny mountains, viz. Lancaster, Berks, Bucks, Montgomery, Lehigh, Northampton, York, Northumberland and other counties, whose population consisted of German Pennsylvanians, we direct our attention first of all to that part of the country and its inhabitants, considering more especially their moral condition at that period. We will, however, find ourselves necessitated to extend our view somewhat further and consider several historical factors, which reach chronologically into earlier history, and co-operated in the introductory history which we now write.

#### § 1. The German Pennsylvanians.

The German Pennsylvanians, of whom we now speak, immigrated from Europe into Pennsylvania; and because in their time the so-called "Kleinstaateri" (the system of small states or provinces) prevailed in Germany, it may well be said that they came from a country of "lords many and gods many." This immigration into Pennsylvania was started in the proper

sense of the word by the philanthropic and pious Friend (Quaker) WILLIAM PENN, who had already traveled and labored in Germany before he entered upon the actual possession of the immense tract of land, which has immortalized his name. Although he was a Briton he acquired a sufficient knowledge of the German language to enable him to converse with Germans, and by the guarantee of religious and political freedom in his colony immigration was started as if by magic. These precious privileges had become an imperative desideratum to those tyrannized and oppressed people. We must here pass by many interesting details in order to follow our main purpose.

### § 2. The First German Immigrants.

The British ship *Concord* \* landed the first cargo of German immigrants on the 6th day † of October, 1683, at Philadelphia, Pa. Immediately a beginning was made by them to found *Germantown* near Philadelphia, under the supervision of the very capable and renowned pioneer FRANZ DANIEL PASTORIUS, but the extreme poverty of these people compelled them to live at first in very small log cabins in the original forests. The beggarly appearance of this first German-town ("Deutschen-Stadt") induced certain wags to call it "Poor-mans-town" by way of ridicule. But to-day not a few millionaires are among its citizens.

A few decades later this immigration assumed immense dimensions. The Pennsylvanian historian I. D. Rupp alone counts in his book ‡ over *thirty thousand names* of Germans, Swedes and Hollanders—comprised under the general designation of *Palatinates*—who emigrated into Pennsylvania from 1727 till 1776, and yet his lists are far from being complete.

### § 8. An Exodus.

A colossal movement of Palatinate immigrants took place during 1708-9 who settled upon the western shore of the Hudson river in the then province of New York, and under great hardships and embarrassments laid the foundations of the towns of Newburg, Rhinebeck, New Palatine and others. But being sorely harassed by the New York Provincial Government many of them moved up the Hudson river into Central New York and settled in the Mohawk and Canajoharie valleys in the primitive wilderness among the Indians where they wrestled with the wild forests and great poverty until they had changed those forests into beautiful farms. Whoever, at the present time, travels from Albany to Syracuse, N. Y., will be

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\* ) "This vessel, which brought the advance guard of the first German immigrants to Pennsylvania, has remained unhonored and almost unknown, whilst every child can tell of the 'Mayflower', that brought over the Pilgrim Fathers, and which has been glorified in poetry and prose. Perhaps at some future time a similar enthusiasm will spring up among the Germans over the almost forgotten *Concord*." Prof. Seidensticker's *Geschichtsblätter*, p. 23.

† ) At that time the "old style" was still in use, according to present reckoning it would be October 16.

‡ ) Rupp's *Collection of more than 30,000 Names, etc.*

greatly delighted by the sight of splendid farms and towns where about 175 years ago untutored savages and wild animals reigned without rivals in the fearful wild-woods.

But these industrious Germans were again harassed by British officials and speculators who cast their greedy eyes upon their beautiful clearings and fruitful farms. Failing to find deliverance from these tormenters many of them resolved to emigrate to Pennsylvania, and quite a caravan started about the year 1720 and made their way under many hardships through the roadless wilderness from the Mohawk Valley across the mountains and down the Wyoming and Susquehannah valleys until they reached Berks County, Pa., and joined the German settlements in the neighborhood of Womelsdorf in said county. Their leader was the justly renowned JOHN CONRAD WEISER, who also settled near Womelsdorf and became very useful to the State authorities as an interpreter in their dealings with the Indians. Here, then, these Germans found at last the long-desired peace and received decent treatment under the government of the friendly Penn family.\*

#### § 4. Correspondence.

These events were, of course, reported, by mail and otherwise, to Germany. The Swedish traveler Peter Kalm says: "The Germans wrote to their relatives and friends in Germany and advised those who intended to immigrate to America, by all means to avoid New York where the authorities had treated them so hatefully." These representations made a strong impression and induced immigrants to avoid New York and locate themselves in Pennsylvania.† Hence we see hosts of Germans in the early part of the eighteenth century hastening into Pennsylvania and establishing homesteads in the wilderness among the Indians.—And what were the evidently strong motives inducing them thereto?

#### § 5. Motives for Immigration.

"We know that religious motives induced the persecuted Puritans and Quakers to forsake their fatherland and seek an asylum in the New World. The same was the case with the first German immigrants. The treaty of peace, made at Westphalia, in 1648, at the close of the Thirty Years War, recognized but three confessions of faith in the German Empire: the Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed. Whosoever was, by conscientious conviction, induced to shape his Christian faith differently, to understand the Bible otherwise, and clothe his worship in other forms, found his life

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\* ) Those Germans who remained in the Mohawk valley, N. Y., were for a long time on friendly terms with the Mohawk Indians around them; they intermarried to some extent and learned also the language of the savages, from which arose the curious "Mohawk-German" dialect, used by their descendants. The Evangelical Association established one of its first Home Missions in 1839 among these Mohawk Germans. For further information about these people we refer to Fr. Kapp's interesting *Geschichte der Deutschen im Staate New York*.

† ) Kapp's *Geschichte*, p. 138.

embittered by Church and State. These non-conformist Christians, who were vehemently assailed and mercilessly persecuted, became quite numerous in Germany toward the close of the seventeenth century. The harmless *Mennonites* seldom found even a precarious toleration, the pious *Schwenkfelders* had to endure most shameful treatment, even the *Pietists*, the pious followers of PHILIP JACOB SPENER, who but insisted upon a deeper apprehension and more conscientious practice of religion within the sphere of Lutheranism, were regarded with suspicion by the scholastic Church, coarsely villified, and reported to the authorities of the State as being dangerous innovators. The *Mystics*, who arose in manifold shadings, both among the learned and the common people, were regarded as fit subjects for the mad-house and the penitentiary.\* These unpleasant facts became almost irresistible inducements for emigration.

#### § 6. The Palatinates.

Among these immigrants the real Palatinates† were by far the most numerous. Indescribable sufferings compelled the farmers and citizens of the Palatinate to leave the naturally beautiful Rhenish provinces and seek for themselves a peaceful home in the "New World."

The thirty-years-war fearfully devastated the entire Palatinate. Spinola, Mansfeld and Tilly made terrible havoc [1620-1622.] The Spaniards invaded it under Gallas in 1635 and exceeded all others in savage cruelty. The Rhenish provinces became like a wilderness. As a result of these measureless devastations a fearful famine prevailed during 1635-38. So great was the destitution that the poor sufferers were driven to eat the flesh of dogs, cats, rats, mice, frogs and carcasses. Starving people killed each other and ate up the slain; graves were violated and the decaying bodies eaten! In addition to all this a fearful pestilence broke out among the suffering people. The French and Bavarians invaded the Rhenish provinces in 1639 and rioted fearfully. The first good harvest in 1641 was destroyed. In 1649 scarcely one-fiftieth part of the population was left, and the country seemed like a desert. In the year 1673 Louis XIV. of France commenced his ravages and practised the most reckless incendiarism; his devastating pillages were continued at intervals until 1679. In 1680 this French despot again invaded the German Palatinate and continued his ravages until 1695. The prosperity of the people was ruined for at least one generation. "A desert shall henceforth be the boundary of France," said Louis. Heidelberg and Mannheim were burned in 1689, and after that Speyer, Worms and other cities. And who could count all the smaller towns and villages that were leveled to the ground? Even the homeless mercenaries of the Thirty-Years-War did not rage so furiously and yet so systematically as did the armed vandals of this sanguinary monarch, who represented himself and his people as the very flower of European civilization. Facts cried to heaven, that since the times of the Huns and

\*) Prof. Seidensticker's *Geschichtsblätter*, p. 5.

†) Inhabitants of the Palatinate.

Goths no such outrages had been committed in the European world. The effects of those horrible devastations are not even yet altogether obliterated.\*

#### § 7. Foes Within.

In addition to all the other miseries of these Rhenish provinces there arose inner foes. Roman Catholic Prince Electors ("Kurfürsten") took possession of the government, who, being influenced by Jesuits, persecuted the Reformed, Huguenot refugees. These depraved rulers also tried to imitate the extravagance of the French court. Luxuriousness, extravagance and licentiousness rivaled each other; the poor people were taxed almost to death, in order to support this scandalous government (1690–1799.) Their misery mocks all description. *Civil and ecclesiastical distress* compelled the downtrodden people to forsake their ancestral homes and fatherland by thousands. Baden and Württemberg, which also furnished a large contingent to this stream of emigration, had suffered scarcely less. But we may not describe these calamities any further, and gladly turn from them to other interesting topics.

#### § 8. Jacob Albright's Father.

Among the tens of thousands who fled from those sad scenes of vandalism was also JOHN ALBRIGHT, the father of JACOB ALBRIGHT. John Albright came in the sailship *Johnson* from Rotterdam *via* Deal across the Atlantic, arriving at Philadelphia on the 19th day of September 1732, and afterward settled a few miles from the site of the present City of Pottstown, on the eastern side of the Schuylkill river, in Montgomery County, Pa. — The same vessel carried 330 Palatinate immigrants.† John Albright must have been still a young man at that time. Jacob and Ludwig Albright, both under 16 years of age and probably John Albright's brothers, came on the same ship. Of John Albright's ancestry we have not been able to find any traces. The probability is that his ancestors were lost in the terrible commotions described above, and their records destroyed.

#### § 9. The Schwenkfelders.

These people, constituting a small Christian sect, emigrated in the year 1734 from Silesia, Germany, into Pennsylvania and settled chiefly in the territory covered by the present counties of Montgomery, Berks, Bucks, and Lehigh. They are followers of the Silesian nobleman CASPAR SCHWENKFELD VON OSSING, born 1490, and a contemporary of Dr. Luther and the Reformation. Schwenkfeld was in all main points of doctrine an orthodox believer; he was sincerely pious, and a mystic in the good sense of the word. He took a great interest in the movements of the Reformation, but differed from Luther and Lutheran theologians concerning the

\*) For a full description of this great misery see Kapp's *Geschichte der Deutschen Einwanderung nach Amerika*, pp. 58–77.

†) Rupp's 30,000 *Namen*, etc.

Lord's Supper, the means of grace and several other points, though he did not reject the sacraments. Luther disliked him very much on this account, called him "Stinkfeld," and declared him to be possessed of the devil, etc. Schwenkfeld was master of the original biblical languages, wrote many folios and smaller books and pamphlets. Among these we note his book, entitled: "The Heavenly Medicine" ("Die Himmlische Arznei"), as being exceptionally good.\* These Schwenkfelders never organized themselves in Europe into an ecclesiastical community. They were a quiet people, but were equally maltreated by Catholics and Lutherans, and had to endure the "spoiling of their goods" and imprisonment. Count Zinzendorf and a few other noblemen protected them as long as they could. Finally they felt compelled, for conscience and liberty's sake, to leave their country and seek a home in Pennsylvania, where they were after many years visited by Jacob Albright and the Evangelical preachers.

#### § 10. Concerning a few other Denominations.

There is scarcely any need of a detailed description of the history and settlement of the Mennonites, Moravians and similar sects who emigrated to Pennsylvania during those years, as we may take it for granted that the reader possesses considerable knowledge of them and their settlement in the "New World." And this applies in a much larger degree to the Lutherans and Reformed who constituted the bulk of the German immigrants.

Thus we see that civil and ecclesiastical oppression, the never ceasing martial unrest and civil convulsions, and withal a pinching poverty, impelled these Germans to come to the "land of promise" — Pennsylvania, where they could serve God according to the dictates of their consciences, and at the same time secure a peaceful home and a competency for themselves and their families. In doing this they transformed the wild woods, as it were, into a paradise; and in order to accomplish these noble purposes, these German ancestors shunned no privation, toil, nor difficulty.

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\* ) For full information concerning this good man see Gottfried Arnold's *Kirchen- und Ketzerhistorie*, also *Erläuterung für Caspar Schwenkfeld*, published by the Schwenkfelders in Pennsylvania.

## FIRST PERIOD.

1750—1800.

## § 11. Increase of the Germans.

About the year 1750 the Germans in eastern Pennsylvania already numbered tens of thousands, and continued immigration augmented the number rapidly. To this ought to be added the well-known fecundity of the Teutonic race. During the first decade of this period JACOB ALBRIGHT was born May 1, 1759.—“The entire southeastern part of Pennsylvania, excepting, perhaps, Chester County, had since the middle of the previous century been occupied by a German population, whose industry contributed very materially to the prosperity of the province. Probably at that time the Germans constituted more than one half of the entire population of Pennsylvania. Governor Thomas estimated them at three fifth.\* In large portions of this country no other but the German language was heard, and until to-day the so-called Pennsylvania-German maintains itself as a distinctive dialect, produced by a mixture of the palatine and allemannic dialects sprinkled with English words.”†

## § 12. Ecclesiastical Conditions.

Concerning Church-conditions this German population was a variegated mass. A certain Mr. V. Beck, a tourist, who, as it seems, inspected these immigrants at their arrival in Philadelphia and during their temporary stay at that city, wrote of them, on June 6th, 1734: “Here are people belonging to all religions and sects: Lutherans, Reformed, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Catholics, Quakers, Dunkers, Mennonites, Sabbatharians, Seven-days people, Separatists, Bohemians, Schwenkfelders, Tuchfelders, Wellwishers, etc.”‡

William Penn had opened his large province to the oppressed and persecuted, and they came by thousands from Europe and settled in the then three great counties of Pennsylvania: Philadelphia, Bucks, and Lancaster. A more detailed arrangement according to denominations and settlement in the present divisions of counties would give us the following result: The German Quakers in and about Germantown; the Mennonites partly in Germantown, but chiefly in the counties of Montgomery, Bucks, Lehigh,

\* “In 1742 their number was given at 100,000, and in 1783 at 280,000.” Prof. Horne in *History of Lehigh County*, p. 23.

†) Seidensticker's *Geschichtsblaetter*, etc.

‡) Urlsperger's *Nachrichten* I., p. 156.

Lancaster and York; the Dunkers chiefly in Lancaster, York and Montgomery; the Lutherans and Reformed in Montgomery, Lehigh, Bucks, Northampton, Berks, Lebanon, Dauphin, York, Cumberland, Franklin, Adams, and in Central Pennsylvania unto the Allegheny mountain range; the Schwenkfelders in Montgomery county, and throughout the section where Montgomery, Bucks, Lehigh and Berks counties join each other.

These immigrants were nearly all poor,\* and, of course, had to begin the great struggle with the original forests and other untoward conditions and circumstances of this new world to secure the needed shelter and livelihood. Established Church organizations were out of question, and as to Church edifices they were then an impossibility. Ministers of the Gospel were exceedingly scarce, and among the few so-called clergymen there were some of questionable character; yea even some ex-convicts, who fled from Europe, in order to escape merited punishment, and pretended to be ministers until they were unmasked as criminals.

### § 13. Mission of Rev. Heinrich Melchior Muehlenberg.

Although the renowned Pastor HEINRICH MELCHIOR MUEHLENBERG was sent from Halle, Germany, to Pennsylvania, in 1742, to gather into congregations the scattered Lutherans, he succeeded only in a few places in establishing Church-order. In 1754 he and his co-laborers, Revs. Peter Brunnholz and John F. Handschuh in a joint report to the authorities in Halle, bitterly complained on account of the unsatisfactory and untoward condition of Churches and Church-work in this country. In this report they say among other things: "Among the many thousands of colonists that came into this country during these years, there are many impudent, perverted and restless spirits, persons who in Europe would not submit to God, nor to the spiritual and civil authorities; men, who could not live peaceably with their neighbors; people, who led an idle and intemperate life, and in this country seek to make their living and obtain influence by cunning and trickery. This class of people have scarcely set their foot upon this goodly land when they at once set themselves to disregard all order and forthwith use this blessed liberty as a cloak for their iniquity and licentiousness. They mingle with those already here, who are enemies to that which is good and proper; they villify and defame regular teachers, worship, and good arrangements, call these popery, a heavy yoke, and an intolerable burden, and strive to turn the rabble into factions against us, and increase our distress, of which we could cite a number of examples. Such wicked ringleaders destroy the outward order and security which we have established, and turn things into confusion."

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\*) Many of them were too poor to pay their passage across the ocean, and were necessitated to hire themselves as servants — mostly to English residents — who paid for them, by contract for a specified time, and thus they "earned off" the passage money. There arose also a class of brokers, who sold immigrants, both, in Europe and this country, to this "service," and often swindled these poor people out of their small personal possessions.

Furthermore they complain in their letter of ecclesiastical confusion, as follows: "To this must be added the misfortune that when the 'Newlanders,' or rather *soul-sellers*, as they are here called, annually in Autumn bring many thousands of Germans into this country, there also come along with them some so-called preachers whom they have picked up, such as have been either deposed from office in Germany, or committed some villany, or have never been in office, or have been only riotous students. Now, when these outlaws arrive, some disorderly Lutherans purchase them by paying their fare. For this consideration they then must act for some time as ministers of the Gospel and administer the sacraments, whether they have been ordained to the holy office or not. Afterwards they are dismissed and new ones are similarly bought. These vagabonds then perambulate through the country and seek their bread, and in order to accomplish their object the more easily they join themselves to those restless spirits aforementioned, and sneak about in the congregations of regular ministers and stir up the members against the preachers; they unite in defaming that of which they know nothing, but call themselves the genuine Evangelical preachers, and their followers the only orthodox Lutherans. With heavy hearts we must say: 'A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?' Jeremiah 5, 30. 31. 'Is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there? Why then is the health of the daughter of my people not recovered?' Jeremiah 8, 22."

Moreover, these godly men wrote concerning the lack of houses of worship, as follows: "In many places we not only lack houses in which the word could be preached and the sacraments administered without disturbance by the noise of sheep, swine, cows, horses and other irrational creatures in the stalls attached to barns, but we lack still more any sort of buildings in which to conduct schools for poor children. The children roam about like stray lambs, and the numerous young people are being neglected in many places."\* Only at a few places, which they name, matters appeared to be somewhat more promising.

#### § 14. Rev. Michael Schlatter and the Reformed.

Similar conditions existed among the Reformed. In the year 1746 Rev. MICHAEL SCHLATTER came from Switzerland to Pennsylvania to organize the German Reformed Church in this country, but he encountered the same difficulties of which Mr. Muehlenberg speaks. After he had applied himself with considerable success to the establishing of his Church, he fell into disfavor with his associates in the faith. "Schlatter was to be pitied. With his congregation in Philadelphia and the Reformed *Coetus* (Synod) he lost his reputation and found himself compelled to resign his pastorate and take a chaplaincy in the army." †

\* Hallesche Nachrichten, pp. 682-84.

† Seidensticker's Geschichtsblätter, p. 135.

Mr. Schlatter also sent complaining letters to the Reformed authorities in his fatherland. In a letter, written in 1752, he reported, that there were 30,000 Europeans of the Reformed faith in Pennsylvania among whom he had established sixteen parishes, but many other "communities" had no pastors and their condition was most deplorable, and then continues as follows: "But that which makes the condition of these communities still more pitiable is the fact that most of them are not even provided with a good schoolmaster. Very few are willing to become teachers because the poor people, although richly blessed with children, are not able to raise money enough to keep up a school. These children must grow up as wild branches, having no guide but their depraved natures. Thus our Reformed Christianity will deteriorate into a new paganism, and there is danger, that it will become worse than the old heathenism in this country. To properly judge this matter I willingly leave to those who know how to value the salvation of immortal souls.

"It would break the heart of a true Christian, if he could hear the pitiful lamentations and see the flowing tears of such as deplore this condition and lament the fact that they have no food for their souls. Very few of them possess Bibles. And those who besides this hear no preaching and, of course, become lukewarm, careless and hardened are greatly to be pitied. But most of all are the tender children to be commiserated who without religious instruction grow up for perdition and become a prey to Satan and his seducing apostles."\*

#### § 15. Mennonites, Schwenkfelders and Others.

With respect to outward organization the Mennonites and Schwenkfelders were more favorably situated. It was one of their peculiarities to cling together. It was their custom, if not principle, to marry only such as belonged to their faith, and also to wear a peculiar plain dress similar to that of the Quakers. The Moravians brought their peculiarly close Church organization along to this country. Their first settlements, viz.: Bethlehem, Nazareth and several other places excluded all other people from holding property, only those of their faith could own real estate. The Catholics, whose ecclesiastical essence consists in the outward organization, soon organized and submitted, as they do everywhere, to the inflexible rule of the priest. But besides these organized Churches there were hundreds of thousands of Germans who practically lived without the Churches, and abused the blessings of liberty by using them as a license for wickedness. They went astray like sheep without a shepherd, and became a prey to seducing spirits and "ravenous wolves."

#### § 16. Religious Conditions.

In view of the aforesaid conditions and facts the conclusion cannot be avoided that with regard to *true Christianity* — the faith which worketh by

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\*) Schlatter's *Briefe*.

love, the essence of which is Christ within us — the actual religious state of things was a deplorable one.

Pastors Mühlenberg, Handschuh, Brunnholtz, Kunze and others state in their reports to the authorities in Halle, that in their time many immigrants came to Pennsylvania, not induced by a desire to obtain liberty to serve God according to their faith, as was the case with most of the first immigrants, but from mercenary motives. And among them were not a few fugitives, who feared the power of transgressed laws, and who led licentious lives to the great detriment of morality and religion in this country.

The immigrant brokers sent a large number of people across the ocean who were rationalists, and such as had imbibed French atheism, who also made some converts here ; although it is a pleasure to mention the fact, that the first immigrants and their children maintained their belief in God and a degree of respect for the Bible in spite of the worldliness and unfaith that was prevailing to so great an extent.

The scarcity of true preachers of the Gospel was very great. The few faithful Lutheran pastors sent over from Halle, who endeavored *in their way* to bring souls to Christ and lead them into the Lutheran Church, could reach comparatively few of the great mass of German people, and could overcome but few of the many extraordinary difficulties. The same was true of the Reformed, Mennonites and others. And meanwhile the hirelings and wolves in sheep's clothing, already alluded to, did their part in ruining the people morally and religiously. And thus the words of Solomon were fulfilled again : "Where there is no vision (true preaching) the people perish." Prov. 29, 18.

There was a better state of things among the Moravians. Their number was small, they had only a few settlements, and their organization was complete. They had not come to this country to become rich in this world, but chiefly to carry on Mission-work, and they were blessed with some good results among the Indians. Count Zinzendorf came over several times for the purpose of promoting the work and the cause of Missions. He and some of his co-laborers endeavored about the year 1736-40, to unite some pious mystics and a number of preachers of this sort among various denominations into a union, to be called : "The Congregation of God in the Spirit," similar to the Pietists in Europe. Several pious ministers of the Reformed Church, such as JOHN BACHTEL, of Germantown, and others, and a few Lutheran pastors, together with godly laymen, such as HEINRICH ANTHER and JOHN A. GRUBER, and several Mennonites and Schwenkfelders joined this movement. They held blessed meetings in Germantown and other places, and great hopes were entertained. But Mr. Muehlenberg, who was the leader of the Lutherans, and Mr. Schlatter of the Reformed, antagonized Zinzendorf, whom they regarded as a heretic, and opposed this movement. The result was that most of the Lutherans and Reformed withdrew from this "Union." The sectarian spirit gained the

ascendancy, and those who did not agree with it either joined the Moravians or retired into mystic solitude and contemplative silence. The Moravians were henceforth antagonized and treated as a *sect*. Christianity was to have either the Lutheran or Reformed fashion or color; and withal these good men believed they were perfectly right in their narrow views.

It was the old story over again: "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followed not us, and we forbade him, because he followeth not us." Mark 9, 38. O this wretched, ungodly narrowness! What small measure of divine life was yet left in those dreary times should, according to human opinion, flow exclusively in a few strictly bounded denominational rivulets. But divine life cannot be thus limited. It does not agree with denominational incarceration!

### § 17. Pastor Helmuth's Plaintive Letters.

How pitiful a state of things religiously prevailed even in the best organized and oldest Lutheran Churches about thirty years later is shown by published letters written by the Lutheran pastor HELMUTH, of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. In one of these letters, dated April 23rd, 1771, he reports that a few souls had by the grace of God been awakened, and then exclaims sorrowfully: "But how small is this number in comparison with the great mass! True conversion is to the majority such an unknown and strange thing that when Jesus calls, stirs up, and awakens, they will not admit, at least not from the heart, that it is He, but, on the contrary, declare it to be imagination, morbid fancy, yea even the work of the devil who intended to rob one of his faith, not knowing that one has no faith, but is submerged in the deepest unbelief." \*

The same pastor wrote again on the 28th day of October, 1772, as follows: "Iniquity reveals itself among old and young only too plainly. What is most deplorable in this matter is the fact that such wretched people notwithstanding their levity call themselves Christians, even *Lutheran* Christians. They even believe that they belong to the best class of Christians. The blessing of the divine Word drops in their cases upon hot stones and cannot demonstrate its power. They run only to the Church and demand permission to come to the table of the Lord, although this does not belong to such swine (as the Word of God calls them.) That such subjects yet boast the name of Christian is only possible because Church discipline is being so utterly neglected, etc." †

Numerous testimonies of this kind from other sources describing the deplorable state of religion in the Lutheran and Reformed Churches could here be introduced, but these will suffice. This godly pastor Helmuth was one of the few who realized how greatly sin abounded even among the Church people, but he was too much isolated and too weak to stem the tide of wickedness. But if such was the religious condition of an organ-

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\*) Hallesche Nachrichten, p. 1336.

†) Hallesche Nachrichten, pp. 1344-45.

ized and established congregation, what must have been the condition of the unorganized masses of people? —

### § 18. Religious Condition of the Mennonites.

The Mennonite congregations in Pennsylvania in a great measure lost the noble spirit of their former confessors and martyrs who are the glory of their history, and fell into non-essentials and that worldly mindedness which so largely prevailed in this period of time. When one of their ministers, Bishop MARTIN BOEHM, was converted to God about the year 1758 and began to preach the word of God in the demonstration and power of the Spirit, and sinners were led to repentance and brought to Christ, and when he at a later time was led, in union with the pious Reformed pastor PH. WILLIAM OTTERBEIN and others, to hold special meetings in order to arouse sinners from spiritual death, he was, on this account, expelled from the Mennonite Church.\* Real spiritual life could not be tolerated, but non-essential peculiarities, such as a particular mode of dress, a long beard, etc., were the more extolled as essentially belonging to true godliness.

Similar testimonies by different authors are given concerning other confessions as they existed before the Revolutionary War. One of them summarizes the condition of the Germans in Pennsylvania in this wise: "Though in their situation they were generally industrious and thrifty, yet the condition of religion among them became most deplorable. Common observation indicates that social influences of a local and traditional character are all but necessary in preserving men in their proper religious character. The crossing of the Atlantic, or of the Mississippi, or removal from the country into a city or from the city to the country is a frequent explanation of religious apostasy. The German immigrants brought little of the form of religious helps with them, and they found the least in their new settlements that would guard and nourish spiritual life. In their homes in Europe religion was too often an outward form, and now in their wilderness homes, in their unwillingness to part with all religion, it was to a great extent a mere dead form, which they made more or less effort to establish. Their minds were hardened by the treatment that they had met, their energies were taxed in their struggle to build homes and secure subsistence, and the very atmosphere of the New World encouraged a wild and reckless life." †

Finally let us hear one of the most respected authorities of that time, namely the already quoted Rev. Dr. Muehlenberg, who deplores the deteriorated state of religion in this manner: "The spiritual condition of our people is so miserable that we must shed many tears over it. The young people grow up without the knowledge of religion and sink rapidly into heathenism." ‡

\*) *Life of Ph. William Otterbein*, pp. 131-148.

†) *Drury's Life of Ph. William Otterbein*, pp. 61-2.

‡) *Life and Times of Muehlenberg*, p. 68.

### § 19. Deterioration of Conditions by the War.

During the year 1775 the war between the American colonies and Great Britain was inaugurated. The war-fever also took a powerful hold upon the Germans of Pennsylvania. Of this Pastor Helmuth, of Lancaster, Pa., says in a letter, dated August 25th, 1775: "Great preparations for war are being made throughout this country, and nearly everybody is arming himself for battle. The zeal which manifests itself under these sad circumstances is indescribable. When one hundred men have been called for, a great many more will offer themselves, and those who are not accepted become greatly dissatisfied. In all my acquaintance with history I know of no similar case. Whole neighborhoods of which it was expected it would require years until people would volunteer have become intensely warlike as soon as they heard of the first attack by the British at Lexington.

"Quakers, Mennonites, etc., deny in large numbers their former confessional principle and participate in the military drill. The tumult of war is heard hourly in the streets." \*

BANCROFT says: "The Germans who constituted a great portion of the population of the province of Pennsylvania were all on the side of liberty. Whole battalions of them went into the war."

Another author says: "Selected German companies were formed, who held themselves in readiness to march anywhere, if required."

These Germans were among the best soldiers in Washington's army, and served throughout the entire war. Hundreds of them were slain in the heat of battle, but their places were soon filled by others. Only Mennonites, Quakers, Dunkers and others, who are anti-war Christians, because they entertain conscientious scruples against bearing weapons, were excused by congress (excepting such as volunteered, as aforementioned), but they furnished a great amount of provisions for the army.

But war is the cause of great moral, ecclesiastical and civil disorder, and, of course, this war was no exception. Many ministers were compelled to take their flight, Church-buildings were frequently used as stables for cavalry horses, and also as hospitals, and things generally were thrown into confusion.—

This intense seven-years-war almost ruined the colonies, and after peace was concluded — although the victory of glorious freedom and independence was complete and the joy over it indescribable — the country appeared almost as if a devastating cyclone had swept over it. "There was," says a noted author, "no department of society, public, private, social, secular or religious, which did not suffer. The country was impoverished and exhausted. The pecuniary expenses of the war amounted to not less than \$170,000,000 — a greater outlay in proportion to the wealth of the country, than twenty times that sum would be at the present time. A very considerable portion of this amount remained in the form of a debt.

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\*) *Hallesche Nachrichten*, p. 1367.

The sacrifice of human life was also great, not less than eighty thousand Americans perishing, or one for every forty of the inhabitants. Twelve or fifteen cities and numerous villages were laid in ashes. Industry was fatally crippled, and demands were made upon the resources of the country which but few families could afford to sustain. The virtuous sons of many households were transformed into dissipated, discontented, ruined men. Numerous houses of worship were either destroyed or so seriously desecrated and injured as to be unfit for further use."\*

#### § 20. Increase of Intemperance.

The war also caused a fearful increase in the manufacture and consumption of the worst intoxicants. At that time the view prevailed very generally that strong drink was an absolute necessity for the soldier, to enable him to endure all the severe hardships of war; hence it was with the best intention that Congress supplied the army with great quantities of alcoholic liquors, whereby the appetite for it was immensely augmented. The discharged soldiers brought this thirst along home as one of the baleful heritages of the war, and by their example induced others also to submit to the tyranny of intemperance. During the time of war foreign trade was nearly cut off, hence distilleries were erected at home which produced the strongest of intoxicants, by which a general "overspreading of desolations" was caused. And as under these circumstances the liquor business became very profitable, it flourished remarkably, even far into the following century. Already in 1792 there were 2,579 distilleries running to their full capacity in the then geographically limited country. It was considered essential to good manners to offer strong drink on all social occasions, even at funerals, social visits, on the Sabbath-day as well as on other days. Everybody drank. The farmer kept his rum barrel in the cellar, and most of them ran their own small distilleries, producing apple, rye and potatoe-brandies for their own use and for the market. During haymaking and harvest it was believed that heat and labor could not be endured unless frequent potions of the so-called "dram" were freely indulged. Even many clergymen indulged in the drinking habit until they became confirmed drunkards, which was in those times excused as being a "sin of weakness." The Germans of Pennsylvania also obtained a full share of the increase of this fearful evil.

#### § 21. Political Disorders.

This general deterioration was also seen and felt in politics. The grand rise of the spirit of liberty during the war-period, trespassed, in many cases, after the close of the struggle, all bounds, and was perverted into licentiousness. Law and order became irksome. There arose a few small seditions, but the brave and circumspect president Washington soon succeeded in quelling them. During the second term of Washington's presidency this evil spirit appeared in the shape of political partisanship,

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\*) *Christianity in the United States*, p. 261.

and there came a time when he, the faithful "Father of the Country," was villified and stigmatized by political party papers and demagogical braggarts, as if he were one of the worst of men. The notorious Thomas Paine bitterly assailed Washington in a private letter, from which we take the following extract: "And as for you, sir, treacherous in private friendship, and a hypocrite in public life, the world will be puzzled to decide whether you are an apostate or an impostor, whether you have abandoned good principles or whether you ever had any."

Washington deeply felt this personal abuse and referred to it in a letter to Mr. Jefferson in 1796. He said: "I have been accused of being the enemy of America and subject to the influence of a foreign country; and, to prove that, every act of my administration is tortured and the grossest and most insidious misrepresentations made by giving one side only of a subject, and that, too, in such exaggerated and indecent terms as could scarcely be applied to a Nero, or a notorious defaulter, or even to a common pickpocket."\*

To a friend, who had addressed him on these matters, he wrote, among other things also this: "Your sentiments that we are drawing rapidly to a crisis accord with mine. What the event will be is beyond my foresight."†

But the Lord, the God of our Fathers, watched over the government and the crisis passed without a catastrophe. Although the Germans of

\* *Memoirs of Hon. Thomas Jefferson*, Vol. I, pp. 66. 67.

†) For a fuller representation of this state of things see *Christianity in the United States*, pp. 339, 340.

We add the following vivid paragraph from page 338 of said book: "Moral deterioration is a concomitant and a consequence of war. About one half of the thirty years extending from 1753 to 1783 were occupied by the French and Indian and the Revolutionary wars, and other Indian wars followed. The moral effect was what might be easily conceived. The withdrawal of so many men of all ages from the quiet and conservative pursuits of industry to military life, away from the restraints of the Sabbath and the sanctuary and in intimate association with unprincipled and skeptical men of foreign lands, engendered in many minds, hitherto virtuous, laxity, unrest and moral recklessness. The twenty years following the Revolution was a time of the lowest general morality in American history fully attested by the biographies and newspapers of that period and the records of ecclesiastical bodies. In the churches there was much complaint of general lukewarmness and grievous apostasies. Many were the lamentations and warnings of good men, though faintly heard by the public ear, and arousing but little influence to awake the people to religious activity. Primitive morality passed away and Sabbath breaking, profanity and other gross vices abounded. The faithful ministers of the Presbyterian Church deeply deplored the moral condition of the country. At the session of the Synod of Philadelphia and New York in 1788, the report on the State of the Church emphasized "the lamentable decay of vital piety" and the "gross immoralities increasing to an awful degree." The next year they mention the "great and increasing decay of vital piety, the degeneracy of manners the want of public spirit, and the prevalence of vice and immorality throughout the land." *Minutes of Synod, 1778-1779.*

Pennsylvania were not driven so far in this direction as was the English population, yet they were more or less influenced by it.

### § 22. Unbelief, Deism, Atheism, etc.

The so-called English and French infidelity came into this country during the war-period. The alliance of the struggling colonies with France opened the channel to this evil stream. It is almost incredible what a flood ensued. Nearly all the public men became affected by it more or less. When Timothy Dwight, D. D. was elected to the presidency of the already influential Yale College in 1795, he found atheistic clubs in it, and the students were so thoroughly permeated with infidelity and controlled by the adoration of English and French infidels that many of them discarded their own names and adopted those of said unbelievers. European vessels brought tens of thousand of copies of infidel books to our shores. An immense edition of Tom Paine's "Age of Reason" was published in France for America and was sold here for a few pennies or given away. A German edition also appeared and this evil seed also bore its detrimental fruits. The wild, mad spirit of unbelief assumed control over the movement for freedom, which in its beginning in France was led by the noble Marquis Lafayette and others of the same mind and aimed at a well ordered constitutional government. This evil spirit of infidelity which broke through all bounds and led France into the maelstrom of stark atheism, licentiousness, anarchy, and desolation of humanity, also made its impression upon America, and had it not been for the watchful care of Providence, our country would have sunk into utter moral ruin. In France the popular cry was: "Liberty, Fraternity, Equality!" These beautiful words had a pleasant sound in many American ears. Washington, however, was soon convinced of the unguineness of this cry and exhorted to great cautiousness, and when, finally, the *guillotine* commenced its havoc, it served as an *eye-opener* to the American people.

A very detrimental effect produced by this current of unbelief was the loosening of proper conceptions with regard to chastity. A creditable witness wrote at the beginning of the present century: "I once cut out of all newspapers we received, the advertisements of the runaway wives, and pasted them on a slip of paper, close under each other. At the end of a month the slip reached from the ceiling to the floor of the room, more than ten feet high, and contained more than one hundred and twenty-three advertisements. We did not receive, at most, more than one twentieth part of the newspapers of the United States."\* In the State of New York a society was formed for the expressed purpose of exterminating Christianity and the existing laws, and practicing without restraint the lusts of the flesh viz: fornication and adultery, and this licentiousness was to be eulogized and proclaimed as liberty and the rights of human nature.

It was a time of great darkness and danger. But God preserved such

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\*) Dorchester's *Christianity in the United States*, p. 342.

men as Washington, Franklin and Adams as believers in his Word, whilst Jefferson and his like, yielded to unbelief, at least to its milder form—deism. The Germans were disturbed chiefly by rationalism and many were led in this direction by clerical vagabonds who had come from Europe. And although the masses did not altogether fall away from orthodoxy, yet the “spirit of the times” exerted a noticeable influence in that direction.

### § 23. Hessian Prisoners of War.

These prisoners and their descendants became a considerable factor in the population and conditions of the Germans in Pennsylvania. These people were sold to the British government by their civil rulers to be employed in the war against the American patriots. In order to make them fight the more fiercely they were told that the Americans were exceedingly cruel and would treat their prisoners inhumanly. One writer—Rev. Weems—asserts even that they persuaded these Hessians that the Americans were cannibals and would certainly make dinners of them if they suffered themselves to be made prisoners! When Washington by his celebrated war-stroke at Trenton, New Jersey, on Christmas, 1776, captured a very large contingent of Hessians and treated them with great kindness, they were greatly astonished. He sent them into Pennsylvania where they were placed in barracks at Allentown, Ephrata, and Lancaster for some time and received friendly care. Of them a Pennsylvanian historian says: “These Hessian soldiers were sturdy Germans, who did not voluntarily serve the King of Great Britain, but had been sold by the sovereign of their country, who tyrannized over them, into the British army. They fought by compulsion against the Americans, and when, during their captivity, they were treated humanely, they availed themselves joyfully of the opportunity to bid good-bye forever to their oppressors and assist in preparing America as an asylum for millions. Most of them established homesteads in this country and became loyal citizens.”\*

A detachment of these prisoners was kept at Lancaster where the Rev. J. C. A. HELFFENSTEIN, of the German Reformed Church, frequently preached the Gospel to them. Of him his biographer says: “Being himself decidedly favorable to the cause of this country and of freedom he did not hesitate, when opportunity offered to disclose his sentiments. On one occasion he preached on the text, Isaiah 52, 2: ‘For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nought, and shall be redeemed without money.’ This sermon caused a good deal of excitement.”†

Quite a number of these Hessians settled themselves, at the close of the war, in Lancaster county, and among them was HENRY SEYBERT, the father of the well-known Bishop JOHN SEYBERT.‡ Concerning him the

\*) *Skizzen aus dem Lechathale*, p. 149.

†) Harbaugh's *Fathers of the German Reformed Church*, Vol. II, p. 225.

‡) About 30,000 men had been thus sold to the British government to assist in

the following is reported :

"During the War of American Independence, Henry Seybert, then a lad of fifteen years, was brought to this country among the German mercenaries employed by George III. of England, in his war with the American colonies. At the close of the war young Seybert refused to be 'redeemed' by the British government, preferring to try his fortunes in the new Republic which had achieved so brilliant a victory over one of the foremost nations of the world, rather than to return to Europe. The result was that the lad was thrown into prison at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, from which a philanthropic gentleman, named Schaffner, released him, by the payment of one hundred dollars as a ransom price. He served his benefactor three years for his liberty, working at his trade as a tailor."†

This infamous traffic cost England over ten millions of dollars.\*

#### § 24. The First Native German-American Generation.

Toward the close of this period the fathers and mothers among the first immigrants had nearly all gone the "way of all flesh." Another generation had already grown up—to which also belonged JACOB ALBRIGHT—which was not only separated from the "fatherland," but was practically also unacquainted with it. Surrounded by a wild, new country and its savage aborigines, striving to secure for themselves an independent existence and home, unable, however, to acquire conveniences or articles of luxury, and compelled to adopt the simplest mode of life, having scarcely any school-privileges and still less of preaching or the use of the means of grace, whilst cunning hirelings and "wolves in sheep's clothing," who professed to be preachers of the Gospel without having been called either by God or man, intruded themselves upon these Germans and seduced entire congregations by their unchristian lives, and as, moreover, the general demoralization, consequent upon the war, penetrated the individual and national life more and more—it was no wonder that the "ways of Zion were desolate," so that a second Jeremiah would have had sad occasion to compose lamentations over the deplorable desolation of morals and religion! If we should cite the testimonies of those times, which are at our command, they alone would make a book. The flood of depravity might be likened to a deluge. The saddest feature of it was that there were scarcely any shepherds of souls to be found; generally speaking there

making war upon the American patriots. According to Fr. Kapp's report the following list of soldiers thus sent to America, is correct:

Hessen-Cassel	sent	-	-	-	-	-	16,992	men.
Hessen-Hanau	"	-	-	-	-	-	2,422	"
Braunschweig	"	-	-	-	-	-	5,723	"
Anspach-Bayreuth	"	-	-	-	-	-	2,353	"
Waldeck	"	-	-	-	-	-	1,225	"
Anhalt-Zerbst	"	-	-	-	-	-	1,160	"
Total							29,875	"

\* ) Lowell's *Hessians in the Revolution*.

† ) *Life of Bishop Seybert*, p. 11.

was scarcely anyone, who truly cared for the erring souls of these hundreds of thousands of Germans !

### § 25. Summary Review.

Before we pass on to show how the Lord brought about providential arrangements to rescue these people, let us take a condensed view of the situation of these Pennsylvanians, from the close of the war until the year 1800.

A third generation began to make its appearance. Immigration had to a great extent subsided, but the natural increase was very abundant, almost in every house there was "a joyful mother of children," which the Bible declares to be a divine blessing. A peculiar "German-Pennsylvanian" dialect was already largely developed, and these native Germans considered themselves true *Americans*, and there existed a wide chasm between their views, habits and the current language and those of newly arrived Germans.\*

The aforementioned Pennsylvanian dialect now became largely interspersed with English words with a corrupted pronunciation, and the peculiar circumstances produced some original forms of expression. The Moravians and the older Schwenkfelders, however, adhered to the German language proper, but generally the Pennsylvanian dialect prevailed in the German counties of the State, even until this day.

But notwithstanding the uncouthness of this dialect it has valuable features. An original force, freshness and compactness inheres in it. One might, by way of illustration, say : Whilst the scholarly German respects all the turns, inflexions, and corners of the German proper the Pennsylvanian runs by his forcible and concentrated words and sentences straight across the field and thus directly toward his goal. Remarkably, too, this *Galilean* German may be cast into a beautiful and highly interesting poetic form, of which we find splendid examples in Harbaugh's "*Harfe*."† And when the German Pennsylvanian intends to give his established "opinion" on a given subject he can do so in a very impressive and emphatic manner in prose. And when angry he is capable of profanity and billingsgate and such epithets as may not be put on paper — and in villification he is simply unsurpassable.

### § 26. Some Peculiarities of the German Pennsylvanians.

Notwithstanding the religious deterioration of these people they retained some excellent characteristics :

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\*) A state of feeling developed between the German-Pennsylvanians and fresh German immigrants similar to that which exists between the Germans and Alsations in Europe. Although radically German himself the Pennsylvanian had become entirely Americanized in his feelings and sentiments. A new arrival from Europe would — sometimes with a shade of derision — be called 'a German.' And if he happened to come from Hessa, the prejudice was much stronger, because the Hessians had shed German-American blood during the Revolutionary war.

†See also *Vierteljahrsschrift* No. 1, 1884.

1. They were honest in their dealings and business transactions. A shrewd defrauder—"an ear-slit Jew"—they could not endure, they hated such a character, as the horse thief is detested in the West.

2. A promise made was deemed as sacred as a written contract.

3. To pay one's debts was with them a main thing.

4. Industry, economy and domestic affection, the care of children for parents in old age was considered as lofty a virtue as the care of children by their parents.

5. Mutual help without remuneration, in time of need, as for instance in case of fire, severe sickness, funerals, heavy losses by accident, etc., was a sacred principle of the unwritten code of neighborhoods.

6. Their manner was frank and straightforward. They knew nothing of Chesterfieldian etiquette and customs. But their frankness would sometimes run into rudeness of speech. They were not at all dude-like. Among them were not a few peculiar, original and interesting characters.

7. Notwithstanding their general wickedness, which manifested itself chiefly in levity, profanity, drinking, fighting, dancing and indulgence in the so-called "frolics," they were by no means atheists. Such would be regarded as moral monsters. In spite of moral and ecclesiastical deterioration they were still inclined to be somewhat Churchly. Preaching, baptism and the Lord's Supper were not entirely thrown overboard. If no regular pastor could be obtained they would make temporary arrangements with any ecclesiastical nondescript, who might have happened along, if he had but a glib tongue, and had sufficient skill to act as pastor. But when a herald of the Gospel appeared, calling sinners to repentance, insisting on a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and a renewed, godly life, then their zeal for their supposed "faith" would excite them almost to madness, supposing that such a preacher was a fanatic and seducer, who would induce people to apostatize from "the faith," and then "they would be lost forever and ever!" Of this we shall see many examples further on.

#### § 27. Some Peculiar Conditions of Things.

It seems quite proper at this juncture to glance at several peculiar facts of the times under consideration. There existed great poverty in regard to literature. Only a few secular papers were published in German—religious ones none at all. The Allentown *Friedensbote* (Messenger of Peace) and the *Readinger Adler* (Reading Eagle) were the leading periodicals—about as large as our present Sunday-school papers. Books were quite scarce beside those few copies which the ancestors had brought with them from Europe. Money to buy books with or to secure a scholarly education was likewise scarce. The paper money which congress had issued in abundance toward the close of the war had become worthless, because it could not be redeemed with coin.\* Gold and Silver had not yet been dis-

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\* ) This so-called "continental money" had become so utterly valueless that it

covered in the United States, and they were dependent upon Mexico and South America for these metals. Public Schools had not been introduced; there existed only deficient private schools, in which reading, writing and arithmetic were poorly taught. No canals were yet dug, no railroads built, and no telegraph existed; mail-service was imperfect and poorly managed. There was a great lack of good country roads. The very first turnpike in this country, extending from Lancaster to Philadelphia, was completed as late as 1794. The farmer had no machines, excepting, perhaps, a "wind-mill" turned by hand for cleaning grain. Public travel and intercourse was difficult and often quite dangerous. People, who, before the year 1800, and even later, removed from Eastern Pennsylvania across the Allegheny mountains were not expected to be seen again in this life; and those who went further away, even into Ohio, were, according to popular conception, gone to the ends of the earth! These things will frequently cast light upon our history as we proceed.

#### § 28. Decadence of Religious Life.

The religious condition of the population has already been portrayed, but in order to show that no improvement took place before the year 1800, we add a few somewhat later testimonies. Bishop John Seybert, who is an excellent authority, gives a faithful portrayal in a historical sketch as follows: "About the year 1800 the German population of Pennsylvania consisted chiefly of Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Reformed, Mennonites, Old School and New School Baptists (Dunkers), Schwenkfelders, etc. The majority of Catholics, Lutherans and partly also the Reformed were guilty of gross violation of God's law; profanity, Sabbath-desecration, drunkenness, etc., being quite common among them. Baptism, confirmation, with an occasional reception of the Lord's Supper, constituted the essentials of their religion. The preachers themselves, with but few exceptions, were wicked and hostile toward converted people. The Mennonites and Dunkers in general had a more pious exterior; in reality they were, nevertheless, enemies to true experimental religion, which manifested itself among them and also among the Schwenkfelders, when persons were converted to God."

Mr. Seybert also described the sad state of the Church in his home at Manheim, Pa., not far from Mr. Albright's neighborhood, in the following words: "The Roman Catholics, Lutheran and German Reformed Churches had their children baptized in infancy. When they reached the age of 12 to 20 years, they attended catechetical instruction, and were afterward confirmed, on which occasion the minister demanded of them, in the presence of God and all the people, to renounce Satan and sin and to serve God faithfully until death; then they were consecrated by the laying on of hands and declared to be Christians. This usually took place on Easter Sunday, but on Easter Monday these Christians could be seen in the ball-room, at

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became an expression of worthlessness and derision. "Not worth a continental"—was applied to any worthless object in common conversation.

the drinking places, at gambling-tables, as also on Christmas, New Year and Pentecost. The majority of these pretended Christians, thus manufactured, were a rough and wicked set — swearers, Sabbath-breakers and inebriates. Even some Church officials were drunkards, liars, and guilty of dishonesty and other sins, so that the saying became current: No one is fit to be a Church officer, unless he has an illegitimate child!" This proverb was, of course, intended to be ironical, but it indicated a great deal.

### § 29. Testimonies of Pastors Schmucker, Kurtz and Nevin.

The Lutheran Pastor J. G. SCHMUCKER, D. D., states that about this time "the state of things in the German Churches wore a gloomy aspect, and that only a small number of the ministers composing the Synod to which he belonged, were in his opinion, converted men." \*

In a biography of Dr. Schmucker, deceased, which was published in the *Lutheran Observer*, Dr. Benjamin Kurtz says that the departed, when he took charge of several congregations at and about Hagerstown, Md., in 1794, found the state of Christianity in a deplorable condition. After noticing the general spiritual ruin of the Churches, Dr. Kurtz goes on to say:

"Sunday-schools, Bible-classes, prayer-meetings, weekly lectures, etc., had not yet been introduced. There were no stoves and no lamps in the Churches; night-meetings were regarded as new measures, and as tending to fanaticism; though for dancing, playing cards, etc., they were thought to be very appropriate. Conversion was a strange word, and revivals were unknown. Methodists indeed, and they alone, talked about conversion; and some few among them, we presume, knew from personal experience what it meant. In other Churches also, the Lord doubtless had his chosen few; but they were like the gleanings of the olive tree, two or three on the topmost branches. The cock-pit, the race-course, the long-bullet lane, the dog and the bear fight, etc., were more numerous attended than the house of God. On the whole, darkness comparatively covered the land, and gross darkness the people." †

This description of the congregations of Hagerstown and vicinity is a true picture of most congregations of the German Churches of this country in those days. Such was the state of things in a spiritual point of view, when the Evangelical Association took its origin.

Again Dr. Kurtz speaks in the same periodical of a somewhat later period of time, having reference to the same subject, in this wise: "Some thirty-five years ago, when God in his mercy sanctioned our poor labors with a glorious outpouring of his Spirit, and for the first time in our ministry granted us a mighty revival, the opposition of the world and the devil was almost unparalleled. A revival in the Lutheran Church was a new thing in that day; we had never heard of but one, and that was in Bro. Reck's Church, in Winchester, Va. He can testify to the bitterness, malevolence,

\* ) Orwig's *History of the Ev. Association*, p. 14.

† ) *Lutheran Observer*, No. 1107.

and awful wickedness which characterized the adversaries of such divine visitations in those days of ignorance, hardness of heart, and spiritual blindness. It seemed as if all hell were let loose. What *was*,—what *could* be done in the face of such fierce rebellion? If in view of the work itself, it was the happiest event of our ministry; in connection with the diabolical hate and slander that enveloped it, it was one of the darkest periods of our life.” \*

Dr. JOHN W. NEVIN, of the German Reformed Church, makes the following statements with regard to the early condition of the Reformed Church: “To be confirmed and then to take the sacrament occasionally was counted by the multitude all that was necessary to make one a good Christian, if only a tolerable decency of outward life was maintained besides, without any regard at all to the religion of the heart. True, serious piety was indeed often treated with open and marked scorn. In the bosom of the Church itself it was stigmatized as *Schwärmerei*, *Kopfhängerei*, or miserable driveling Methodism. The idea of a new birth was treated as a pietistic whimery. Experimental religion, in all its forms, was eschewed as a new-fangled invention of cunning impostors brought in to turn the heads of the weak, and to lead captive silly women. Prayer-meetings were held to be a spiritual abomination. Family worship was a species of saintly affectation, barely tolerable in the case of ministers—though some of them gloried in having no altar in their houses—but absolutely disgraceful for common Christians. To show an awakened concern on the subject of religion, a disposition to call on God in daily secret prayer was to incur certain reproach. . . . The picture, it must be acknowledged, is dark, but not more so than the truth of history would seem to require.” †

Is there need of more testimony to show the urgent necessity of a thorough reformation of the Germans in Eastern Pennsylvania, Maryland, etc.? An abundance of it could be introduced, but what has been given, will suffice.

### § 30. Philip Wilhelm Otterbein and Martin Boehm.

God, who “is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance,” and who has made provision in his Son Jesus Christ for “all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth,” also had mercy upon these unfortunate Germans. Whilst sin and moral ruin was spreading among them He was preparing his “chosen vessels”, and inaugurated movements intended to check the evil and bring about a change for the better.

In the year 1752 PHILIP WILHELM OTTERBEIN came from Nassau, Germany, as a Reformed minister, to Pennsylvania. He had been awakened

\*) *Lutheran Observer*, No. 1114. (Jan. 12th, 1855.)

†) Nevin's twenty-eighth lecture on the Heidelberg Catechism, published in 1842. *Note.* The above extract does not appear in the German edition of this history, because it was not at hand when that was written.

already in Europe, and belonged to the so-called "Pietism". During his pastorate in Lancaster, Pa., he found the precious peace of God and received the witness of the Holy Spirit that he was a child of God. He now commenced more earnestly preaching repentance, conversion and true godliness. This had its effect in the awakening and conversion of sinners, but on the other hand opposition and persecution arose.

He found but few among the Reformed ministers who sympathized with him, such as Revs. Helffenstein, Hendel, Hautz and others, but the opponents were many. After some years he went to Tulpehocken, where he preached and introduced prayer-meetings, prayed with families in their homes, held experience meetings, and conversions took place; but he could not stay there.

MARTIN BOEHM, who was born in Lancaster County, Pa., belonged to the Mennonites, and was, according to their custom, elected a minister of the Gospel. But he found that preaching the Gospel without personal salvation was impossible. This brought him into great distress concerning his own salvation, until he found peace with God in the year 1758.

Now he preached with power and blessed effect. He was then appointed a bishop among his people. A number of persons were awakened among the Mennonites and the affiliating Omish and Dunker persuasions, as also among the Reformed and Lutheran Churches. At a general meeting, which Martin Boehm held at Isaac Lang's in Lancaster County—said to have taken place on Pentecost, 1766—and which was attended by large numbers of awakened souls from among different denominations—some of which even had been stirred up previously by Count Zinzendorf's labors—Otterbein unexpectedly appeared and heard Martin Boehm preach the Gospel. Otterbein recognized in this preacher a saved man and in his preaching the true Gospel, and this discovery so powerfully touched and joyfully moved him, that at the close of the sermon he hastened to Boehm, and, embracing him before all the people, exclaimed: "We are brethren!"\*

Boehm was afterwards expelled from the Mennonites on account of his earnest labors. Otterbein, Boehm, Gueting—who was also a Reformed minister—and others now labored among the Germans in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia, and in consequence there gradually arose an association known as "The United Brethren in Christ," through which many souls were led to the Saviour.

Bishop FRANCIS ASBURY—the Methodist pioneer bishop—had much fellowship with Boehm † and Otterbein, and this movement assumed a marked Methodist character. But gradually it inclined, especially among

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\*) *Life of Rev. Philip William Otterbein*, by Rev. A. W. Drury, A. M., pp. 116, 117.

†) Boehm's son, Henry Boehm, became a Methodist and Asbury's traveling companion and servant on his extensive tours in his old age. Henry Boehm also became a Methodist preacher, and died one hundred years old.

the young converts, toward the Methodist Episcopal Church; and although an organic union never took place between them this movement became in later times almost entirely English, so that the great work of saving the Germans was in a large degree left undone.

### § 31. Bishop Asbury's Views.

Another reason why this movement did not benefit the Germans very much was, that the United Brethren at that time did not fully adopt the plan of an itinerant ministry and had no controlling, energetic leader. On this point Bishop Asbury, who was very intimate with Boehm and Otterbein, expressed his views as follows: "Why was not the German reformation in the Middle States, that sprang up with Boehm, Otterbein and their helpers, more perfect? Was money, was labor made a consideration with these primitive men? No; they wanted not the one and heeded not the other. They all had had Church membership, as Reformed, Lutherans, Moravians, Dunkers, Mennonites, etc. The spiritual men of these societies generally united with the reformers; but they brought along with them their formalities, superstitions and peculiar opinions of religious education. There was no master-spirit to rise up, and organize, and lead them. Some of the ministers located, and only added to their charge, partial travelling labors, and all were independent. It remains to be proved, whether a reformation, in any country, or under any circumstances, can be perpetuated without a well directed itinerancy. But these faithful men of God were not the less zealous in declaring the truth, because they failed to erect a Church government. This was wished for by many. . . . . Otterbein, one of the wisest and best of men, could only approve; when urged to put himself forward as a leader, his great modesty and diffidence of himself, forbade his acceptance of so high a trust. His journeys, nevertheless, were long, his visits frequent, his labors constant, so that after he came to Baltimore, he might be called a traveling preacher, until age and infirmities compelled him to be still," etc.\*

Martin Boehm had for many years after his rejection by the Mennonites preached the Gospel in brotherly fellowship with Otterbein and others and led many souls to the Saviour. With regard to position and influence he was second only to Otterbein. He also realized the need of an organization, but he did not desire to be the leader in this matter. He says: "Being convinced of the necessity of order and discipline in the Church of God, and having no wish to be at the head of a separate body, I advised serious persons to join the Methodists, whose doctrine, discipline, and zeal suited, as I thought, an unlearned, sincere, and simple-hearted people. Several of the ministers with whom I labored, continued to meet in conference of the German United Brethren, but we felt the difficulties from

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\*) *Methodist Magazine*, Vol. VI., pp. 22, 249 and *Bang's History of the M. E. Church*, Vol. II. pp. 365-67.

the want of that which the Methodists possessed. Age having overtaken me with some of its accompanying infirmities, I could not travel as I had formerly done. In 1802 I enrolled my name on a Methodist Class-book, and have found great comfort with my brethren."\*

### § 32. Beginning of Methodism in America.

Methodism in America was introduced in the city of New York during the years 1760-66 chiefly through a German woman, BARBARA HECK, who had come from Ireland. She was one of Wesley's converts,† and gave the first impulse to this movement. But the Methodists followed up the English population by their excellent itinerancy of heroic pioneers. However, they also entered, to some extent, into Eastern Pennsylvania. Bishop Asbury on his remarkable episcopal tours frequently came from New England on his way to the South through that part of the State and stopped with Martin Boehm and other congenial men of God in Lancaster County. Benjamin Abbott, the extraordinary revivalist, also invaded that section about the year 1780. Several classes were established and the Methodist discipline introduced. A number of German Pennsylvanians were converted, and Henry Boehm, Jacob Gruber and a few others, having acquired the English language sufficiently, became Methodist preachers. But Asbury and his co-laborers discouraged special efforts in the German language, as they expected this language would become extinct in about twenty years. German immigration had almost ceased during and for some time after the Revolutionary war, and many young American Germans acquired the English language. Thus the German Pennsylvanians received very little spiritual help from this direction.

### § 33. Jacob Albright.

JACOB ALBRIGHT was born on the first day of May, 1759, near Pottstown, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, and grew up amidst the previously described conditions and circumstances of the German Pennsylvanians.‡ The deluge of sin which flooded nearly all the people carried him also along. Of this he himself makes the following statement: "I walked frivolously in the path of a carnal life, rejoiced with those who rejoiced, and thought little of the object of human life, regarding not the duty of

\*) Rev. Adam Miller's *Origin and Progress of German Missions*, pp. 238-39.

†) Mrs. Heck was a descendant of the "Pfälzer," who emigrated from the Rhenish Provinces to England and Ireland in 1708-10.

‡) We have already seen that JOHN ALBRIGHT (p. 15) had settled near Pottstown, Pennsylvania. He had four sons; the oldest, whose name cannot be ascertained, was slain in the Revolutionary war; the second son was Jacob, the founder of the Ev. Association; the third, whose name was Daniel, was a soldier in the second war with England 1812-14, and afterward moved to Ohio, and settled near Bucyrus, where he was visited by the German Methodist missionary, Dr. WILLIAM NAST, in 1837, and was in his old age converted to God; the fourth, named George, moved into Mifflin county, Pa. They were all staunch and honest men.

man, much less that of a Christian. I lived as though this little span of duration would last eternally, and committed many sins for which God has threatened severe punishment."

True, he had been, in his youth, instructed in the catechism by a Lutheran minister, and was afterwards confirmed and entered as a member of that Church in Douglas Township, Montgomery County, Pa. But, as we have already seen, the religious condition of the Churches at that time was very sad. "Nothing was known of true conversion. Of prayermeetings, Bible-readings, family devotions, Sunday-schools, revivals, etc., scarcely any trace could be found. There was hardly any form of godliness, and if the power thereof did occasionally manifest itself it was forthwith decried as fanaticism. 'The salt — the Church — had lost its savor, and wherewith should it be salted?'"\*

#### § 34. His Marriage, Business and Family.

In his 26th year (1785) he married Miss Catharine Cope, and soon afterwards removed from his native place to Lancaster County, and there commenced the brick and tile business, together with the cultivation of a small farm. He was a very industrious and methodical business man. As at that time many buildings were roofed with tiles, his business, which he thoroughly understood, was very profitable, hence within a few years he had acquired a competency for his family.

As he received but very meagre pecuniary support during his ministry, he frequently returned home and prepared a kiln of brick or tiles, leaving his wife to dispose of them while he filled his appointments. In this way he supported his family during his itinerancy, hence the accusations of his enemies that he neglected his family are false. Had he not been called into the ministry, he would in all probability have become a wealthy man; for, notwithstanding his great sacrifices for the cause of Christ, his administrator reported his estate to be worth about four thousand dollars which was, at that time, regarded a considerable fortune. Through his business he became widely known, and his strict honesty and punctuality commanded the respect of his neighbors and customers, among whom he was known as the "honest tiler." And this title, which the founder of the Evangelical Association won through his business, is no more dishonorable to him and the Evangelical Association, than it is for Christ and his Church to have it said of Him: "Is not this the *carpenter*, Mary's son?"

He was blessed with a family of nine children of whom, however, only three — two sons and one daughter — survived him. After his conversion he felt an intense desire for the conversion of his children. When he was at one time leaving his home to fill several appointments in company with one of his co-laborers, he remarked to him: "It makes a person feel sad to go out into the world to preach repentance and conversion, when one's own

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\*) *Albright and his Co-Laborers*, pp. 20, 21.

family is yet unconverted, but I have still hope for my Sarah" (meaning his daughter). In this hope he was not disappointed. A number of his grandchildren by his youngest son David were also converted and became useful members of the Church.\*

### § 35. His Awakening and Severe Penitential Struggle.

After he had removed to Lancaster County and until the year 1790 he at times felt the operations of "the grace of God which bringeth salvation" upon his heart, to lead him to repentance. His conscience upbraided him on account of his sins, and a purpose was gradually formed to commence "a better life."—"However," he says, "this resolution remained only a plan, which was not executed, because the carnal mind opposed it."

While Albright was thus vacillating between light and darkness, it pleased the Lord, in the year 1790, to afflict his family with sickness, and several of his children died. He regarded this as a chastisement and realized that the hand of the Lord was heavily upon him. At the funeral of his children a German Reformed minister, named *Anton Hantz*,† who had the reputation of being a converted man, officiated. The word of God found way to his heart, which was already very contrite, so that he was deeply impressed and became willing to seek the Lord immediately.

Albright informs us that whilst he was in a state of repentance the truths which he had learned in his youth through *catechetical instruction* were so quickened by the Holy Spirit that this good seed now began to germinate. The realization of his sins and the sinful state of his heart became quite clear and deep. Even the evil "thoughts and intents of the heart" were discovered to his spiritual eye, and he "found trouble and sorrow" (Ps. 116, 3.). Now he realized that prayer had become an imperative need. We again quote his language: "As my heart realized this keen sense of sorrow, and this resolution to reform was formed in my soul, I also felt the need of prayer and of pouring out my heart before God. I felt that I had power to pray ardently, heartily, and with submission. I fell upon my knees; tears of bitter sorrow flowed down my cheeks, and a long, intense, and fervent prayer ascended to the throne of God for mercy and the remission of my sins."

Such language furnishes incontrovertible proof that Albright's repentance was neither superficial nor the work of man. It was the work of the Holy Spirit who applied the word of God and the divine law in such a way to his conscience, that he was brought into the condition of the awakened

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\*) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, pp. 13-16.

†) This Parson *Hantz* was one of the very few preachers of repentance of those times. At a place called Lansing, he found it necessary to speak often on repentance. One of the members evidently thought there was enough of it and remarked to him: "You have preached a good while on repentance; preach something else." "As soon as you repent," was the quick reply. Harbaugh's *Fathers of the German Reformed Church*, Vol. II, p. 370.

sinner, which Paul describes in the seventh chapter of Romans, and like unto him cried out: "O, wretched man that I am! —Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

In the month of July 1791 (when he was in his thirty-second year) he reached a crisis which bordered on despair — and yet there had appeared no "Ananias"\* to point him to the Saviour of sinners.

### § 36. Grace Triumphs—A Sound Conversion.

At last, after long and painful seeking, help came inwardly and outwardly—Albright and his "Ananias" met each other. Of this, Bishop Seybert, who was a contemporary and neighbor of Albright, speaks as follows: "Albright began to weep, fast and pray. After he had for some time sought help and counsel from God and man, he visited a man named *Adam Riegel*, an earnest and zealous minister, not, however, connected with any religious denomination. This man took an interest in him and prayed and labored with him until he realized the pardon of his sins and eternal life in his soul, and thus found peace, comfort and joy in the blood of Christ, and was so overwhelmingly filled with divine joy, that he knew not how to praise and magnify the Lord." This took place in Adam Riegel's house.†

Albright was now happily delivered out of the horrible pit and his feet placed upon Jesus Christ, the Rock of Ages. A new song was put into his mouth to praise his God, and with a compassionate look upon his German neighbors and brethren he desired that *many* might see it and fear and trust in the Lord. (Psalm 40, 1-3) "Now," he says, "it was no more a burden to do that which is good; I was inclined to hate sin, it was a pleasure to serve the Lord, and I realized great joy in having intercourse with God in prayer."

"From all this it is very evident that Albright's conversion was not a pretended nor a superficial one — it was a genuine and thorough change of the heart. It was not merely an awakening from the sleep of sin, a realization of the burden of sin accompanied with good resolutions and a partial reformation, but it was a spiritual resurrection, a passing from spiritual death unto divine life, a genuine renewal of the heart after the image of God, a delivery from the power of darkness and a translation into the glorious Kingdom of the Son of God. Genuine contrition, a deep sense of his wretchedness and lost condition out of Christ, attended with painful sorrow and sadness, had preceded, and while in this state of mind he lay at

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\*) *Acts 9, 10-18.*

†) This man *Riegel* was a *lay-preacher*, such as God sometimes calls and employs when the exigencies of the times demand it, as was the case then. He was an undenominational preacher. It was a time when the Word of God was "scarce and dear," and under Divine Providence there were those who cast out devils in Christ's name, but did not follow Him with the "regulars." And again the Lord said: "Forbid him not." (Mark 9, 39.)

the feet of Christ, bitter tears flowing down his cheeks. God granted him the assurance, that there was salvation for him, that He would accept him for Christ's sake and complete the work already begun within him. As soon as he was persuaded of God's willingness to accept him, he was enabled to believe with the heart and the pardon of his sins, life and holy joy followed this exercise of faith."\*

After his conversion Albright and Riegel had blessed seasons together in preaching, prayer, and other devotional meetings in Riegel's house and elsewhere. There was at that time a considerable awakening among the Germans of Lancaster County, but those awakened and newly converted were regarded as apostates and fanatics; their lively and fervent worship was frowned upon, and they were, in most cases, expelled from their Churches. They then met by themselves and edified each other as best they could under those unfavorable circumstances. —

### § 37. Albright a Methodical Man.

He was constitutionally a methodical man. In the Lutheran Church he was now regarded as a fanatic and driven away from it. The people who had become awakened through the labors of Otterbein, Boehm and others were not yet willing as before stated, to unite as an organized Church. Many of them held the view that a Church having strict order and discipline is "a yoke of bondage" against which the apostle Paul warns believers. Of them Bishop Seybert spoke thus: "From these and others there came into existence a sort of association to which in the beginning various names were applied, such as Otterbein people, Boehmians, Impartials, General or Liberty people, because they would not come under Church discipline. Everyone should and would stand alone and at the same time be united in spirit and mutual labor.† Nevertheless experience taught them that without organization and a good Church discipline no Christian association can exist and prosper, hence they were led in later times to unite, and adopted the name: The United Brethren in Christ."‡

### § 38. Rev. Benjamin Abbott's Labors in Albright's Neighborhood— A Methodist Class.

This wonderful man Abbott—to whom we have previously referred—came from New Jersey about the year 1780, and went like a flaming herald through Lancaster County. Martin Boehm entertained him. Abbott preached English and others exhorted in German, but the power of God penetrated farther than languages, and many sinners were shaken and

\*) Orwig's *History of the Evangelical Association*, p. 12.

†) This revival produced some earnest and godly preachers, such as Philip Wilhelm Otterbein, Martin Boehm, Benedict Swope, George Adam Gueting, Christian Newcomer, Abraham Troxel, Abraham and Christian Herschy, Christopher Grosch, Felix Licht and others.

‡) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, p. 37.

brought to God. Bishop Asbury frequently passed through those parts and Martin Boehm was one of his intimate friends. From these labors arose several English classes, one of which was formed in Albright's neighborhood. His immediate neighbor — their farms adjoined each other — *Isaac Davies*, was their class-leader.

These Methodists were at that time very plain and earnest Christians, worshipping, of course, in the English language. Persecuted by the unconverted world and under Asbury's régime strictly disciplined, they were closely united and endeavored under much self-denial to live in accordance with the Word of God.

Albright's views and disposition did not agree with the views of the "Liberty-people" mentioned before. He saw great danger in such an unchurchly standpoint and realized that he himself needed the care and encouragement of his brethren in Christ. On this point he says: "After I had experienced the grace of regeneration, I soon recognized the fact that the surest and best way to work out my soul's salvation, and to be ready at all times to fight the good fight of faith, was, to be in fellowship with devout Christians, and to take part in bearing the cross, to pray for and with one another, to be vigilant and edify each other by means of an exemplary life in the service of God."

It is clear from this that Albright had no desire to stand aloof from the Church, or to labor independently for personal aggrandizement, as has been falsely asserted. This thought never entered his mind, but on the contrary, he preferred to serve God, and to bear the cross in fellowship with other pious Christians. But as he was not tolerated in his own Church he had to seek association with other pious followers of Christ.

### § 39. Albright Joins the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Guided by these views he looked about to find a Church which served the Lord and administered proper Church discipline. The result of this prospecting he states as follows: "At this time I knew of no Association of professed Christians who seemed to be more zealous and active, and whose discipline and regulations suited me better, than the Methodists. For this reason I united with them and found among them opportunity to receive great blessings and benefit for my soul. As many things in their mode of worship were not yet clear to me, since it was conducted in the English language, with which I was not sufficiently familiar at this time, I earnestly endeavored to learn the language and become acquainted with their doctrine and discipline, with which I was much pleased. I conformed to its regulations, both in my conduct and devotions."\*

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\* ) Bishop Seybert reports the state of religion among the Methodists at this time as follows: "Among the English people many were truly converted to God, and belonged to the Methodist Church, leading a humble Christian life, serving God in spirit, and preaching powerfully. These were a blessing to the nation, and brought many to a change of heart and mind. But wherever these people served God zealously and led holy lives they were hated and persecuted by the world."

Here we see one of the excellent traits of Albright's character. He was a man of much reflection who did not act hastily in important matters. He did not permit himself to be swayed by the opinions of others, even of good people, and chose not to follow the way of so-called "freedom" from Church discipline which many well-meaning people followed, but selected for himself a Church in which one had at that time to bear much persecution and many crosses, and whose members had to assist in bearing Church-burdens —, and this he did from the *conviction* that their Church-order was the best, and "that this was the right way to work out his salvation." Because of this conviction he did not shrink from the task of learning the English language in order that he might be able to comply with all the duties of a Church-member. We thus see the *thoughtful, faithful and decided* character of the man.

He could not have been induced to take this step from motives of ambition or office-seeking. There was certainly no prospect for a *German*, such as he was, to obtain high offices in an *English* Church. And, as already mentioned, the Methodists of that day had no expectation that the German language would live long in this country. Bishop Seybert informs us that the leaders of that Church believed that in twenty years the German language would die out in the United States! How truly the apostle Paul has said: "Here we know in part!"

Albright had now found an ecclesiastical home which was to him altogether congenial. He enjoyed blessed communion with God and was happy in redeeming love, but had as yet no intimation to what a great work the Lord would call him in the future.

#### § 40. His Zeal for the Lord; He Is Made an Exhorter.

Not only did he and Adam Riegel labor together in devotional meetings after his conversion, but after he had joined the Methodists his activity was developed still further. Of this he speaks as follows: "In the class and prayer-meetings of the Methodists my joy in God increased continually, and I received power to pray impressively in 'public, to the edification of myself and others. Thus I obtained more and more strength, and occasionally, at the request of my fellow Christians, I delivered an exhortation, which did not remain fruitless." In view of this fact he received a written license as an exhorter, which office at that time occupied a place between the class-leader and local preacher. As there was at that time a religious movement in progress among the Germans in Lancaster county—as mentioned heretofore—occasional opportunities offered themselves to deliver a word of exhortation to them.

Until now the thought of preaching had not entered his mind, and he placed no high estimate upon his gifts in this respect. He says: "Naturally I had no talent to speak in public, and I frankly confess that I was less qualified in this respect than any other one who might have undertaken

it." But when the Spirit of God was upon him, his talent, which was as yet undeveloped, became manifest. He further says: "But when I felt myself carried away by the Spirit of God, when prayer brought my soul near to my Redeemer, when I was animated with a hatred against sin, when the righteousness of a scrutinizing judge appeared before me, and I at the same time realized God's overwhelming love towards his fallen creatures, I was seized with an influence which loosened my tongue, and God's grace wrought through me the conversion of fallen sinners and of unconverted professors of religion and the edification of true believers."\*

However, not a few who heard him preach have asserted that his talent for public speaking was of a much higher order than he in his modesty represents it. He was rich in thought, unctuous in delivery, usually his whole heart was moved with his subject, his appearance was attractive, his gestures naturally graceful and becoming, in fine he possessed all the requirements of true eloquence.

#### § 41. Fervent Prayer for His "German Brethren."

Thus Albright spent several years among the Methodists, and as he grew in the knowledge and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ he saw still clearer into what a depth nominal Christianity had fallen among the Germans in America. He saw in them *his kinsmen* and longed intensely that they also might enjoy that salvation which he had found. "In this state of mind," says he, "I frequently cast myself upon my knees and implored God with burning tears that he might lead my German brethren into the knowledge of the truth, that he would send them true, exemplary teachers, who preach the Gospel in its power, in order to awaken the dead and slumbering religious professors out of their sleep of sin, and bring them again to the true life of godliness, so that they too might become partakers of the blessed peace with God and the fellowship of the saints. In this manner I daily prayed for my brethren."† Here we have an example of genuine intercessory prayer wrought by the Holy Spirit, which is "good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." (1 Tim. 2, 3.)

#### § 42. The Divine Call.

"Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Genesis 3, 5). Thus spake the Lord to Moses when He called him to deliver his people out of Egypt. And let everyone who reads this, and especially every minister of the Evangelical Association, remember that he is entering upon *holy ground*, and let him listen with reverence to the intercourse which was held in the holy of holies of Albright's soul between himself and God. But let the scoffer and slanderer hold his peace, for this is a sacred hour. In these solemn moments the Evangelical

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\*) Albright and his Co-laborers, pp. 46, 47.

†) Albright and his Co-laborers, p. 48.

Association was conceived in the heart of this chosen man through the divine call to the ministry.

Being upon his knees, thus interceding for his people, as it were, the divine answer came, but not as he expected it. Let us now listen to his own statement concerning this divine communication: "While I thus held intercourse with God, *all at once it seemed to become light in my soul*; I heard, as it were, a voice within, saying: 'Is it mere chance that the wretched condition of your brethren has affected your heart so much? Is it chance, that your heart, yea, even *your heart*, is so overcome with sympathy for the salvation of your brethren? Is not the hand of Him here visible whose wisdom guides the destiny of individuals as well as that of nations? What, if His infinite love, which desires to lead every soul into Abraham's bosom, *has chosen you* to lead your brethren into the path of life, and to prepare them to share in the mercy of God!' The light and peace in my soul increased. I felt a holy confidence that my prayers were acceptable, and I heard, as it were, the voice of God, 'Go, work in my vineyard; proclaim to my people the Gospel in its primitive purity with energy and power, trusting in my fatherly love that all those who hear and believe shall partake of my grace'."

Of such a call to such a work Albright had never thought and had never put forth any effort to become a minister. When he thus clearly recognized the divine call his nature shrank back, as is often the case with true servants of God. Concerning this fact he further says: "Although these things were very clear to my mind, yet nature suggested many doubts. Though this call did not seem to me to be in conflict with God and his Word, yet, I thought, I am an uneducated and very ordinary man; how many persons of great gifts and learning there are who would be much better instruments than I am, persons who command much more respect and would make a better impression. During such reflections my courage failed me, and then I prayed earnestly, that God might give this commission to some one else, better qualified and worthier than I."

It must be clear to the candid mind that self-importance, greed of honor, and selfishness did not even enter, much less govern this man. Conscious of his own weakness and insufficiency he hesitated in view of the greatness of the work.

Henceforth his inner experience became very interesting. His timid heart clung to excuses, but conscience spoke freely and loudly for God. "To such excuses," he continues, "the voice of my conscience constantly answered that on my part there must be a *confiding* obedience, without murmuring; God's grace would be sufficient; would qualify those whom the Lord had chosen as instruments of his all-comprehensive love, with power from on high, and give great blessings and success to their efforts. Conscience also glowingly pictured the joy and the reward which were awaiting me, if I were obedient to the divine call, and on the other

hand, showed me the injury and ruin which would result to me if I refused to obey the voice of God, and to submit to his will. In the distant future I saw the glittering crown that awaited me if I obeyed, as I was often clearly convinced that I should, the call of the Lord, to proclaim His Kingdom through the Gospel, and to build up the Church in united fellowship, upon Christ the Rock and Foundation-Stone of believers, according to the command of Christ and his apostles."

#### § 43. Hesitating.

Still he hesitated to obey the voice of God. He shrank more and more from the great responsibility, which brought great darkness and confusion upon him. He was not an enthusiast. On the contrary he "counted the costs," and estimated them almost too highly. But let him tell the remarkable story of his inward experience at this time: "Thus the ebb and tide passed through my soul. Notwithstanding the full conviction of a Divine Call, my flesh and blood would still raise many objections, so that I often became undecided whether to obey or not, and thereby was deeply distressed and cast down. A great weight seemed to rest upon me; I had no enjoyment by day, nor rest by night. I became so low-spirited that nothing was able to cheer me—my inward peace fled, and the idea that it would be almost impossible, without the assistance of others, without any ecclesiastical connection, only increased my anxiety. All the external dangers and difficulties that would, under such circumstances, come upon me, were vividly placed before my imagination. I trembled in these hours of temptation, notwithstanding that I had God's promises on my side. This was especially the case when I considered that I would be compelled to stand alone without any reliable support — for I was convinced God would prove me through trials. And yet, notwithstanding these doubts, the consciousness was wrought within me, that God was mighty in the weak, that he would ask no more than I was able to perform, that the courage he imparted and the grace given, would be sufficient to achieve victory and success, if his honor and glory were kept in view. I was also convinced of his power, that all sufficiency comes from him, and that he would qualify those who do his good pleasure, as I afterward often realized." Finally he gave his consent to the divine call and said to his Master: "Here am I, send me."

#### § 44. Delay, Chastisement, Obedience.

The cause of the Lord requires haste, when His time has come, for there are immortal souls at stake. When the Lord has said, "Go, work in my vineyard," it is meant in earnest. He would not permit a certain man first to go home and take leave of his friends, and another, first to bury his father. If one has *plainly understood* the call of the Lord and *consented thereto*, it is perilous to delay. This was also Albright's experience, concerning which let us now also hear him: "But the execution of this call I

deferred from time to time. I still imagined I saw a difficulty, and when this was removed I persuaded myself of the existence of another. For this indecision the Lord finally chastised me with severe afflictions. A constant cutting pain penetrated every nerve, almost unbearable torment coursed through my frame; my body became emaciated and nothing was left of me but a mere skeleton. My muscular system became so weakened, that I could perform no labor of any kind, and worse than all bodily sufferings, was the terrible feeling which at times overcame my soul as though I was entirely forsaken of God. What I endured in body and in mind, during this sickness is indescribable. Sometimes, in the feeling of being forsaken of God, I cried out in such anguish, that all who saw and heard me, turned away in horror."

Is it safe, either to resist or neglect the divine call to preach the Gospel? Let the experience of Albright be the answer. Like Jonah he had to pass through a terrible ordeal, and like him he became now willing to obey *immediately* if the Lord would but have compassion and restore him, whereupon the peace of God returned to his soul, and he was quickly restored to health.—He now saddled his horse and rode forth into the great field without further counselling with himself or any other human being. This great step—so important for him and hundreds of thousands of his fellow-men—he took in the month of October, 1796. He preached the Gospel wherever he found an opportunity—in churches, school-houses, market-places, private residences, barns, meadows, roads, or in the woods, and "the hand of the Lord was with him," in the awakening and conversion of many wandering souls to the true shepherd, Jesus Christ.\*

#### § 45. A Chosen Vessel.

"He is a chosen vessel unto me." This word of the Lord concerning Paul, (Acts 9, 15.), also applied in a measure to JACOB ALBRIGHT.

The candid reader cannot avoid seeing clearly, that for the rescue of a people situated as were the Germans of Pennsylvania at this time, a man was needed who was one of them, had grown up with them, could converse with them in their dialect, and who understood all their peculiarities—a man also who was soundly converted, filled with love toward them, and was called of God and sent to them to proclaim that salvation which he himself realized by blessed experience—a man, moreover, who also possessed the *genius* and *energy* to place newly converted souls under good Church discipline and proper care, that they might be raised spiritually to be men and fathers in Christ, and would thus become a blessing to humanity and be themselves saved eternally. *Such a man was Jacob Albright.* — It is also very remarkable that Albright was first led into the Methodist Church, in which he remained until he had become acquainted

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\*) For fuller details concerning his call see *Albright and his Co-laborers*, pp. 47-55.

with their excellent discipline and made its principles his own, before the Lord called him to his special work.

#### § 46. An Itinerant Preacher and an Organizer.

Here is now, an *itinerant preacher* and an *organizer*—two cardinal points for the pressing wants of that time. He was not bound to a local congregation, nor embarrassed by an incoherent congregational system. He could go to seek and gather the lost ones, and could introduce the *itinerancy* among the Germans who were scattered far and wide, and spiritually neglected, and *organize* them into Church fellowship, and only in this manner could they be rescued.

The Lord said unto him, as unto Jeremiah : “Thou shalt go unto all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.” Albright went forth and spoke in the name of the Lord.—And without this *divine commission* he could not have ventured upon such an all-important enterprise.

A man of such clear, and practical sense, possessed of a calculating mind, who clearly comprehended the extraordinary difficulties connected with such a work, could not have resolved upon it without the *divine call* and *pressure*. The Evangelical Association can never thank the “only wise” God sufficiently, that by his grace he gave them—denominationally speaking—a founder who was neither a fanatic nor a self-seeking man, who “did not run before he was sent,” but a man who was considerate, cautious, converted and consecrated to God ; who was by his own experience of the deep misery of sin and the great salvation through Christ, prepared to preach to his own countrymen *the Word of God, both out of the Bible and out of his own heart into their hearts.*

#### § 47. Beginning of his Missionary Labors.

After Albright had preached a few times in his neighborhood he made a trip to his native county — Montgomery, — and came into one of the Schwenkfelder settlements.\* Of his labors among them an eye-witness† reported as follows : “On the occasion of the burial of a deceased child of a Schwenkfelder family, in Upper Hanover Township, Montgomery County, Pa., a stranger arrived at the house where the funeral took place, and asked

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\*) “The Schwenkfelders,” already mentioned before, are a small denomination of about 1000 members who are closely united. They had at the time referred to (1796) much among them that was praise-worthy and also some very good books, especially an excellent *Catechism*, of which Rev. William W. Orwig made a liberal use in compiling the second Catechism for the Evangelical Association published in 1846. They were at the time when Albright visited them not yet carried far away by the flood of depravity and worldliness, comparatively speaking, although there are letters extant from that time, which contain loud complaints of worldly-mindedness among their members.

†) Samuel Schultz, Sen.

permission of the preacher, Rev. George Kriebel, to give an exhortation to the assembled congregation, saying that he was an evangelical preacher. Being plainly attired, and his appearance making a good impression, the desired permission was given. This stranger was Mr. Albright, who now accompanied the funeral procession to the "meeting-house," and took a seat beside the preacher behind the table—there being no pulpit in the house.\* In whispers the inquisitive people inquired of each other who this stranger might be, but no one could tell. The sermon over, Mr. Albright, to the surprise of the people, arose and delivered a powerful exhortation. He then asked for permission to preach there, which request was readily granted, and an appointment made for him on a certain Saturday, in day-time. At the time appointed he preached on Matthew 25, of the great final judgment, so powerfully and yet pathetically as to cause tears to flow freely. A second appointment was made there, and afterwards a third in another meeting-house in the so-called Hosensack.

"Meanwhile persecution arose against the good man. Most shameful *inventions* and lying rumors against him were spread abroad. He was represented to the Schwenkfelders as a most abandoned character.†

"This embarrassed the people, and they prohibited his further preaching in their meeting houses. Thereafter a Schwenkfelder named David Schultz, permitted Albright to preach in his house, which he did several times, but without any visible results at that time. Some thirty years afterward, however, a rich soul-harvest took place in that region."

Mr. Albright traveled, preached and labored wherever he found open doors in the eastern counties of Pennsylvania, especially in Lancaster, Berks, Bucks and Northampton, also west of the Susquehanna river through Northumberland, York and Cumberland counties, through the State of Maryland, and in Virginia among the large German settlements in the Shenandoah Valley. Thus he labored in the name of the Lord, who gave him many precious souls for his reward who acknowledged him as their spiritual father, regarding him with high esteem and clinging to him with strong attachment; but they were widely scattered and isolated.

Until the year 1800, four years after he started out as itinerant preacher, no step had been taken anywhere with a view to an organization of congregations, much less of a denomination. Albright had at that time no intention of this kind. He first of all desired to obey the voice of God, who had called him to lead the neglected Germans to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. What else might need to be done he left to the future indications of Providence.

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\* ) It was a log house built in the most primitive style.

† ) One of the ugliest mis-deeds which these calumniators endeavored to fasten upon Albright had been committed by a so-called Lutheran "Pfarrer." Said "Pfarrer" was a fugitive criminal from Germany who officiated for awhile about Columbia and York, Pa., but had no connection with any Synod. We could give *name* and *details*, but, figuratively speaking, pen and paper object.

**§ 48. Why Did Not Albright Remain in the Methodist Church?**

In Albright's time the Methodist Episcopal Church strictly adhered to the rule that their members must attend class-meeting, and repeated absence involved the loss of membership. Albright had found a congenial church home in that denomination, but the work the Lord gave him to do led him away from it, as during his itinerancy he could not attend class-meetings. Otherwise he would have remained a Methodist, probably all his life-time. The assertion made that Albright left the Methodists because they would not ordain him, is a pure fiction. Nothing of that kind occurred. The Methodist leaders did not intend to have a German work at that time, but Albright had to obey the Lord in this matter.



## SECOND PERIOD.

1800—1816.

BEGINNING AND PROGRESS OF DENOMINATIONAL  
ORGANIZATION.

## § 49. The Spiritual Inception of the Evangelical Association.

A communication by the Rev. Henry Stetzel — now in glory — furnishes a report of a private meeting attended by Albright and a few brethren when they specially agreed together “to go forward with the work of the Lord.” This meeting took place even previous to the formation of the three classes in 1800, but as it was not a business meeting, no record of it was kept. The author was well acquainted with Father Charles Bissey whom Bro. Stetzel mentions, and his testimony is perfectly reliable. The said report is as follows :

“It was in the year 1840, before we had a written Church history, that I had a conversation concerning Church matters with Bro. Charles Bissey — who was one of the first-fruits of Albright’s labors — in his house near Quakertown, Bucks County, Pa., when he related to me many things concerning Albright’s preaching on repentance and conversion, and how fiercely he was persecuted. Upon my question whether he had been present at the council-meeting (Rathsversammlung) held in 1803? he answered : ‘Yes— but I was present already when there were only *five* of us.’ He then related that *five brethren* had once met and conversed on the work of God and the opposition against it, and how they resolved to unite themselves very closely. He further said : ‘Upon this we went to prayer, and while we prayed divine power came upon us so extraordinarily that we all became permeated by it.’ *Who* and *where* these five brethren were was not ascertained by me, but it is certain that it was not the council in 1803, for there was a larger number present then, nor did Bro. Bissey mean the formation of the three classes in 1800. It is probable that the five brethren were JACOB ALBRIGHT, CHARLES BISSEY, SAMUEL LIESSER, PETER WALTER, and ABRAHAM BUCK-WALTER. This meeting and formation of a union took place about 1797-98. This event was regarded by Father Bissey as a very important one, for he related it afterward again when I visited him, and placed much stress upon the fact that they became so intimately united after the divine influence had come upon them so mightily and they resolved so intensely to go forward in the work. This is also a proof that the necessity of a close inward union for the prosecution of the work of God was realized quite early and that

this spiritual union was the *inner* beginning of the Evangelical Association." And upon this God has impressed the seal of His approval from that private meeting on until this day.

### § 50. Formation of the First Three Classes.

The "little flock" of converts who recognized Rev. Jacob Albright as their spiritual father and were lovingly attached to him were scattered far around. These babes in Christ, especially in the counties of Berks, Bucks, and Northampton, were persecuted and found no likeminded brethren in Christ with whom they could have worshipped the Lord to edification. Instead of this Mr. Albright and his adherents were shamefully cast out and persecuted. But as Albright had as yet no co-laborers or helpers and himself could rarely re-visit his spiritual children, they were almost situated like sheep without a shepherd. These circumstances convinced him more and more that in this wise much of the fruit of his labor must be lost if he did not organize these awakened and converted souls into congregations and introduce Christian discipline among them. For this reason he ventured upon this step in the year 1800. But because of the fact that his adherents were much scattered he could not at once unite them all in this manner. However, in Berks County, near the Colebrookdale iron works ("at Liesser's") several persons lived together close enough to be united into a "class," which was then called *Liesser's class*, another was formed near Quakertown, Bucks County, and called *Walter's class*, and a third one in Northampton County, called *Philip's class*. For each class a leader was appointed, called *class leader*, whose duty it was to see that every thing was done in these small churches in accordance with the Word of God, and regularly to hold prayer-meetings with the class.

This, then, was the beginning of the outward organization of the Evangelical Association, although this name had not then been adopted. Yea, there was no name yet given to this movement. The first care was for the main thing: the conversion, sanctification and consequent true happiness of men, and the matters of form were left to be shaped by the pressure of circumstances and Divine Providence. A "little grain of mustard seed" had been planted, and lo! it begun to germinate and spring up. It was indeed as yet the "smallest of all grain," but there was *divine life* in it.\*

"This step," says Rev. Wm. W. Orwig, "to found a new ecclesiastical organization was disapproved by almost every one who heard of it, even by better disposed professors of religion; some regarded it as an act of great

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\*) At the session of General Conference at Buffalo, New York, in 1863, the venerable Father John Dreisbach, in an address to the conference said: "The Evangelical Association may aptly be compared to a grain of mustard seed. How small it is, and yet it grows up to be a large tree; and thus small was the beginning of our Association, and now it has grown up to be a stately tree under which we dwell and rejoice in our security." (Compare also Matth. 13, 31. 32.)

weakness, while others looked upon it as being arrogance and nonsense. Many predicted its failure, and looked confidently for its downfall, which, as a matter of course, did not fail to intensify the persecution and contempt of the little band. But the Lord stood by them and their number increased, although quite slowly at first.”\*

Concerning this formation of the first classes, Albright himself speaks as follows : “ Having preached about four years, and having made special efforts to preach the Gospel where vital godliness and Christian discipline were unknown, I endeavored through the grace of God, which was given me, to give to the awakened and converted persons such instructions as they needed, in order to work out their souls’ salvation, and edify each other in the bonds of Christian fellowship, and in the unity of faith, in accordance with the teachings of Christ and his apostles, God granted His blessing upon this undertaking. Many who had previously lived in darkness and ignorance, received the light of life through the instrumentality of this union ; and God, my helper and protector, also strengthened my own heart and mind by His grace, that I was not only enabled to preach pure doctrine to those whom He had entrusted to me, but also to establish them by my own example.” †

The number of members enrolled was at this time only twenty, but if all those scattered over a vast territory could have been united into classes the number would have been much larger—probably several hundreds.

#### § 51. The Lord Provides—John Walter, the First Co-laborer.

God never forsakes his own. To Joshua he said : “ I will not fail thee nor forsake thee ” — “ Only be thou strong and very courageous. ” ( Josh. 1, 5. 7. ) The Lord also took care of Albright and his little flock, and from this small number came forth a mighty co-laborer.

JOHN WALTER, born August 12th, 1781, near Quakertown, Pa., of very poor parents, was awakened and converted through Albright’s visits and labors in his father’s house and at Charles Bissey’s. The exact time and the particular circumstances of his conversion are not known, but it took place before the year 1800, when he was a young man about 19 years old.

He conceived such an attachment to his spiritual father, that he regarded it as a great privilege, to go with him to Lancaster County and learn the brick and tile business, in order to carry it on for Mr. Albright whilst the latter was absent on his missionary tours. But it soon became evident that “ another spirit was in him, ” and he soon went with Albright on his travels and became an excellent exhorter. This took place in 1801. During the following year he commenced to preach, and in such manner as to cause general wonder and admiration.

Here was a young man without any education whatever, who was at

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\* ) Orwig’s *History of the Evangelical Association*, p. 21.

† ) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, pp. 78, 79.

the beginning necessitated to first *spell* the text and hymns he wanted to use in his services, in order to be able to read them to his audiences, and yet he soon became one of the *greatest preachers* in his time, acknowledged as such not only by the little flock which adhered to Albright, but also by scholars and professors belonging to other denominations, who heard him preach.\*

Of him Rev. William W. Orwig writes as follows: "He preached with uncommon energy, and could truly be called a '*son of thunder*.' Some that heard him preach, thought they had never heard the like before. When he was—to use a popular expression—in the right mood to preach, it seemed as if the keys of the understanding of the Holy Scriptures had been given him, whose divine doctrines came like heavy showers upon his audience, and sometimes carried them away as with a torrent. He sometimes preached on great and deep texts, to the great astonishment of his hearers. He was, at the same time an active, faithful, and humble instrument in the service of his Master, and his labors were abundantly blessed to the salvation of many souls."† We shall have frequent occasion further on to refer favorably to this servant of God.

### § 52. The First "Big Meetings."

Such a meeting was usually commenced Saturday afternoon and continued until Sunday evening. In later years the *Quarterly Meetings* grew out of them. These so-called "big" meetings became in the early years of the Association an important institution and contributed not a little to the promotion of the work.

On the day of Pentecost, in the year 1802, the *first* big meeting was held by Mr. Albright at Samuel Liesser's, jr. It was richly blessed to the awakening of sinners and the edification of believers. In the latter part of the Summer [1802] he held the second meeting of this kind at the house of John Thomas, in Mifflin County, Pa., under some stately cherry trees. About one thousand persons gathered from far and near. On Sunday morning Albright preached on John 8, 12: "I am the light of the world,

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\*) Rev. J. G. Schmucker, D. D., a highly respected theologian in the Lutheran Church, heard Walter preach several times. After having heard him the first time he said: "What a pity it is that Walter did not receive a good classical education, and thereby improve his talents; he would have become the greatest preacher in the country," But most likely Walter would not have become such a powerful preacher, if he had first passed through one of the theological schools of *that time*. When Dr. Schmucker had heard him a second time, he remarked: "Walter is a *deeply* learned (tiefgelehrter) man, and an orator who has scarcely been excelled. Oh, he speaks with supernatural power! God in his providence has done a great deal for him." Many similar testimonies by Bishop John Seybert, Adam Ettinger, Henry Niebel and others, could be added, but we refer the reader for further information to "*Glimpses of the Life and Labors of Rev. John Walter*" in "*Albright and his Co-laborers*."

†) Orwig's *History etc.*, pp. 21, 22.

he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." A summary of the sermon has been furnished by an attentive auditor as follows: "He described Christ as the Sun of Righteousness 'which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.' As in Spring time the Sun ascends higher and his beams exert a powerful influence upon the earth, so that the ice melts, the frozen earth becomes thawed and warmed, the vegetation revives and thus causes Spring, Summer and harvest, so Christ operates spiritually upon every heart that yields itself to Him. The rays of this Sun are the truths of God's Word, accompanied by the operations of the Holy Spirit."

He also pointed out how this light, through the preached Gospel, penetrates into spiritually dark neighborhoods, and how darkness rises up against it, just as it is said that natural darkness is greatest before the break of day — but that this light penetrates and enlightens men, and whosoever follows after the light shall not walk in darkness, that is: not live in sin and doubt, but shall have the light of life, and the witness of the Holy Spirit that he is a child of God.\*

This sermon was very clear and powerful, and made a deep impression upon the congregation. Most of those present were so much affected by it that they shed tears and became deeply convicted of the truth. During the delivery of the sermon Albright was so filled with power from on high, that it seemed as though a halo of glory encircled his countenance, and his otherwise impressive person appeared especially graceful. Thus his very appearance exerted a great influence upon the people, for they "saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." (Acts 6, 15.) But Satan, too, had his minions present, who on the outskirts of the congregation sought to cause disturbance. One of them even said, "If I only had powder that would make no report, I would soon shoot that Albright down!" †

### § 53. Slow and Difficult Progress—Another Co-laborer.

The year 1803 became a very important one for the small Association. The number of regular members had increased to forty, and another young man, named ABRAHAM LIESSER, who was also one of Albright's first-fruits, made his first efforts at preaching. Thus the Lord had given his servant already two assistants, who were very promising, although as yet inexperienced.

The reason for the slow progress in these first years was chiefly the fearful depravity of the people, who had sunk with respect to religion to the lowest degree, whilst ungodliness and crimes prevailed. The insignificant instruments whom God had chosen were despised and overwhelmed with scorn and mockings, and were often fiercely threatened and persecuted. It is really remarkable that the work was not crushed and destroyed in its

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\*) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, pp. 82, 83.

†) Reported by Father Wonder, who was present on that occasion.

very beginning. If it had not been of God it would have gone under, but instead of this it progressed continually in spite of all opposition. However only truly converted persons joined the Church; the fires of persecution consumed all "wood, hay and stubble."

#### § 54. A Very Important Council.

As there had been as yet no church government established, no articles of faith adopted and no discipline introduced, the Association began to realize the need of some appropriate arrangement for the better management and promotion of the work. For this purpose a council was called to meet on November 3rd, 1803.\*

Besides ALBRIGHT and his two assistants JOHN WALTER and ABRAHAM LIESSER, the following fourteen brethren and leading members were present: JACOB PHILLIPS, GEORGE MILLER, CHARLES BISSEY, CONRAD PHILLIPS, JOHN BROBST, SOLOMON W. FRIDERICI, CHRISTIAN BROBST, GEORGE PHILLIPS, MICHAEL BROBST, SAMUEL LIESSER, PETER WALTER, ADAM MILLER, JACOB RIEDY, and SOLOMON MILLER.

These men who recognized Mr. Albright as their spiritual father, to whom they were indebted, under God, for their awakening and conversion, now declared, in the name of the entire society that they considered Albright a *Genuine Evangelical Preacher* and acknowledged him as their teacher and *as such they solemnly consecrated him*.—Upon this the council declared the Holy Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments as *their Rule of Faith and Practice*, and presented to Albright a written certificate, in accordance with their declaration concerning him, signed by all present.

This written recognition reads in the original (translated), as follows: "We, the undersigned, as Evangelical and Christian friends, declare JACOB ALBRIGHT as a truly Evangelical minister in every sense of the word and deed, and a professor (Bekenner) in the universal Christian Church and the communion of saints. To this we testify as Brethren and Elders of his society. Given in the state of Pennsylvania, on the 5th day of November, 1803."

This document was signed by John Walter, Abraham Liesser, and the fourteen leading men above mentioned.

When these signers designate themselves in this important document as "Elders" of the association, it cannot be understood in a disciplinary sense as their having been ordained as ministerial elders, but as being the oldest and chief members of the society.

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\*) The place where this Council met is not mentioned in the original documents, they say only: "Given in the state of Pennsylvania, November 5th, 1803." It was not held at Muehlbach (Kleinfeltersville), as has been asserted in recent times. In 1803 the Evangelical preachers had found no entrance as yet at Muehlbach, and there were no members there. John Dreisbach expressed the opinion that this "Council-meeting" was held at Liesser's in Berks County.

"This is an important and valuable document. It is an honorable testimony by a number of men who were not inferior in honesty and truthfulness to their contemporaries, testifying as to the good character and conduct of Jacob Albright. The acknowledgment of Albright as a preacher was based upon the fact that he was a professor\* in the universal Christian Church, and hence belonged to the 'communion of saints.' And how could a person be a true Evangelical minister who was *not* from the very start united with Christ in the spiritual priesthood, even though he possessed all external forms and titles?" †

#### § 55. The Consecration of Albright.

This ordination was directly performed by Rev's. John Walter and Abraham Liesser, who laid their hands on Albright, as the original record shows; and whilst this was being done they and the fourteen brethren afore-mentioned, joined together in solemn prayer to God. Thus was Jacob Albright consecrated as an Evangelical Preacher and "Elder," as the report states it. ‡ This, then, was the origin and beginning, and first formal performance of ministerial ordination in the Evangelical Association.

#### § 56. A Parallel Case.

A very similar ordination took place at Antioch, in Syria, in the year A. D. 43, as related by Luke in Acts 13, 1-3. There we read: "Now there were in the Church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers, as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said: Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." §

Now this ordination through laying on of hands, accompanied with fasting and prayer, *was neither ordered nor performed by the Apostles*,—the order came from the Holy Spirit, who directed these prophets and teachers to *separate* Barnabas and Saul for their work. We have no information whatever that any of these men had been ordained or that any of them stood higher than Barnabas and Saul, who were certainly yet unordained. All five were good men and laborers in the Lord's work, but as regards ordination, or lack of ordination, they evidently all *stood on an equal footing*—just as Albright, Walter and Liesser stood. At all events, this was the first ordination to the office of Apostle, of which the New Testament furnishes any information. With regard to *principle* and *some details* the ordination of Jacob Albright is a parallel to that related by Luke.

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\*) Bekenner means probably in this connection also a *member*.

†) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, pp. 89, 90.

‡) Original Conference Record.

§) According to Mr. Peloubet this took place in the fall of the year A. D. 43.

The word of God nowhere intimates that Christ ever ordained his apostles by laying on of hands. He commissioned them *by word of mouth* (Matthew 28, 18-20) and sent upon them the Holy Spirit as a preparation and equipment.

Neither have we any report that the apostles formally ordained any one to the office of the Gospel ministry. They did ordain "seven deacons" for the superintendency of the "tables," so that the apostles might apply themselves to "prayer, and the ministry of the word," (Acts 6, 1-6.)

It is certain that Paul was never ordained by an apostle. Those who ordained him to the apostolate were Simon, called Niger,\* Lucius, of Cyrene, and Manaen, who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch. These men are designated as "prophets and teachers," the former of whom are placed by Paul *one degree below* the apostles and the latter *four degrees below!* (Ephesians 4. 11.) Please reflect! — We do by no means disparage ordination to the office of the ministry by prayer and imposition of hands, but we do emphatically deny the so-called "apostolic succession." — See about this further on.

#### § 57. A Most Important Subject.

This matter of ordination is for the Evangelical Association a far-reaching and important one, which here demands a thorough consideration. It has been asserted — and the assertion is still being repeated in some circles — that the Evangelical Association is no Church, that she is not even a branch of the General Christian Church, that she has no connection whatever with the "Historical Church" of Christ — whatever that may mean — that her ministerial ordination is not derived from the apostles, and that hence she was not in the line of the so-called "apostolical succession," that she had not even as much claim to being a Church as the Methodist Churches which received their ordination through John Wesley, John Fletcher and others, from the ordained clergymen of the Anglican or Established Church of England, and transmitted the apostolic ordination to the Methodist Church; — or the United Brethren in Christ, who received their ordination through Ph. William Otterbein, who was an ordained minister of the German Reformed Church. It has been asserted too — in the Congregational sense — that only a *local* Church possesses the functions of the Church and the power to ordain, and that therefore the organization or denomination known as the Evangelical Association is no Church in the sense of the New Testament and could only be recognized as a Church in the sense of custom and convenience.

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\*) Commentators generally agree that this appellation "Niger" means a *black man* — an African! There were many such in the primitive Christian Church. Just to think of it — if an *unordained African* had joined in the laying on of hands on Mr. Albright, what a horror would have seized upon some supercilious "high Church" people! Lucius of Cyrene was also from Africa, but, probably, not as black as Simon, hence the distinction "Niger" given to the latter.

But if the Evangelical Association is no Church and not a branch of the Christian Church, then she is a "sect" in the bad sense of the word and has no right to exist. In this case her ministry would be ecclesiastically incompetent, her ordination null and void, and the transactions of her ministry acts of usurpation of the sacred prerogatives of the Christian Church.

If on the other hand the Evangelical Association is a Church only by custom and convenience then her ministry is a sham, for the Gospel ministry must have a better sanction than custom and convenience. At the most she might in that case exist and operate as a missionary society, but ecclesiastical functions, such as the ministry of the Gospel, administration of the sacraments, etc., must be denied her.

### § 58. Several Arguments of the Opponents.

As in the view of most ecclesiastics a rightful ordination conditions a rightful existence of the Church — the two involving each other — it is in place here to consider a few of the arguments of the opponents of the ecclesiastical rights of the Evangelical Association.

Perhaps no one among them has used his pen more energetically and extensively than Rev. JOHN W. NEVIN, D. D., whilst he was professor in the Theological Seminary of the German Reformed Church at Mercersburg, Pa.\*

Induced by a certain circumstance the Mercersburg classis of the German Reformed Church undertook in the year 1849 to decide the question whether the ordination of the ministry of the Evangelical Association was valid, and hence, whether said Association belonged to the Christian Church!

The discussion of this subject was quite extensive and animated. The result was that the classis declared almost unanimously — only four votes remaining neutral — that the Evangelical Association does not belong to the Christian Church and hence her ministerial ordination is void!

Upon this decision they proceeded to re-ordain a minister who had been an ordained preacher in the Evangelical Association, and it was claimed that during these transactions the blessed influence of the Holy Spirit was especially realized!!

This decision of that prominent classis, which was brought about under the direction of the leaders of that Church and which has never been disapproved or revoked, commits to a great extent this Reformed Church to the doctrine of the "apostolical succession" and the un-Churching of all denominations who are not recognized as standing in that line! Done at Greencastle, Pa., A. D. 1849.

In his enthusiastic report of this transaction Dr. Nevin says, among

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\* Dr. Nevin was otherwise a pious and learned man, who, according to reliable testimonies, lived and died in the Lord; but by his studies of the ancient Church-fathers and Church history he imbibed high-churchly ideas, by which he also caused much friction in his own church.

other things: "Concerning the correctness of this decision there ought to be no doubt. There could be cases in which it might be difficult to solve the question of Church-character so practically, but no such difficulty presents itself in this case, unless we abandon all faith in the divine constitution of the Church in any respect and thus dismiss the question as being of no value or importance whatever. If the Church has any outward authority or force as an object of faith or confidence, and if schism in the primitive Church sense is in any way conceivable, than it must be clear that self-constituted and self-rising bodies like the Albright brethren, etc., have no right nor part in this heavenly corporation." Upon this Mr. Nevin quotes the history of the origin of the Ev. Association as given in Rupp's "History of all Denominations", and then continues, "How is it possible to recognize such a body which established itself in this century in a corner of Pennsylvania, as belonging to the Holy General Church, that mystic and universal communion of the apostolic creed, which originated eighteen centuries ago in Christ, and of which we are told that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it?—If Jacob Albright had a right to found a Church in this manner, then every pious Tom, Dick and Harry possesses the same right to constitute himself the author and fountain of a new ministry, provided he can find a few simple-minded disciples who would submit to his ghostly authority and who would lay their hands on him, in order to confirm his commission. Thus even every Christian family might finally raise itself to the dignity of a Christian denomination, and administer the sacraments in accordance with their own opinion. It is worse than naught in any such cases to make any pretense of faith in the Church as a divine historical institution."

He then continues to discuss the necessity that in the time of the reformation, new denominations arose, such as the Lutheran Reformed and other Churches, which he fully justifies because at that time there occurred extraordinary events which greatly disturbed the historic channel of the Church—and then continues: "Let her (the Ev. Association) show to us the necessity of her appearance in the organic life of the Church as an organic whole.

"What a caricature of such a conception is presented to us in the independent, free rise of the Evangelical Association—the self-unchurching brotherhood of Jacob Albright. Was it the force of the universal life of organic Christianity which gave life to this mushroom? That would indeed be the labor of a mountain to bring forth a mouse.—Has the problem of centuries and ages, which had burdened the heart of the Church for so long a time, found its sublime solution at last in this insignificant, ghostly appearance—in the mission of such a man and the creation of such a sect? The very thought itself is an absurdity. The thing arose in a corner, it had no historical necessity. No one can say whence it came, and it passes rapidly on, no one can tell whither. There is no room left for a comparison

with the reformation, and hence not the least cause to fear that this great interest would be endangered if in this clear case the whole truth is expressed and done.

"Luther was the organ of the Church. Jacob Albright was the subject of private imagination and hallucination. No deep, general force—the accumulated world-sense of ages, came to its irresistible and necessary crisis in his person. He had no call to organize a new denomination. His sect is not a product of the Church, but a schismatic denial of its objective historical necessity from beginning to end."\*

In his further treatment of this matter Dr. Nevin also endeavors to show that they, as the Reformed Church, owed this fearless testimony to the "Albright Brethren" and others, in order to convince these erring ones of the error of their ways, and convert them!—But oh, thou diminutive Evangelical Association—how dost thou, as an illegitimate dwarf, appear in this mirror!

#### § 59. Short-sighted Scholars.

To this good man Nevin—as well as to some others of his sort in America and Europe—happened this misfortune, that in his zealous studies of the apostlical and Church fathers and patrology in general, and also the history of the reformation and the reformatory Churches, he neglected to study thoroughly and judge correctly the more recent and the present conditions of the Church. In other words, whilst he looked many centuries back, and searched the antiquities of the Church he largely overlooked the present, and the result was that, that which lay right before his eyes, particularly with regard to the Evangelical Association, remained almost unknown to him. What little he knew about our Church he evidently learned from the incomplete and defective reports of Rupp's and Winebrenner's "History of all Denominations," and from unfriendly hearsay. And he evidently used his "High-Church Spectacles" when he looked at Jacob Albright, who then, of course, appeared exceedingly small in his sight.

Had Mr. Nevin been considerate enough to procure and read the small biography of Jacob Albright, compiled by his co-laborer, Rev. George Miller, which was easily obtainable in that time, he would have obtained quite a different and a correct view of the heart, motives and sentiments of Albright. Had he studied more thoroughly the letters of Pastors Muehlenberg, Handschuh, Kuntze, and others in "Halle'sche Nachrichten," and other works of the kind, and last, but not least, had he remembered his own description of the exceedingly lamentable religious state of his own

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\*) *Mercersburg Review*, July 1849, pp. 381-386.

NOTE.—The above is a re-translation from the German. The English original not being now accessible. The translator, who made both translations, affirms that the sense has been preserved throughout.

denomination in Albright's time, as published in his lectures on the Heidelberg Catechism in 1842 (which is abundantly confirmed by Rev. Mr. Schlatter's letter,\* he would have acquired a correct knowledge of the indispensable necessity of a thorough reformation with reference to repentance, conversion and a godly life among the German Churches of Pennsylvania—his own Church included.

Into what a deplorable veneered heathenism the neglected Germans had fallen; how God awakened Albright and caused him to feel the Pauline "woe is me if I preach not the Gospel," until the Lord by chastisement almost compelled him to go whithersoever he sent him—the esteemed reader has already seen on the foregoing pages of this book.

#### § 60. The Outward Connection of the Evangelical Association with the General Christian Church.

It will be in place here to show the connection of the Evangelical Association with the Christian Church and withal with the Churches of the Reformation:—

1. The founder of this denomination was born in the Evangelical Lutheran Church, was baptized in his infancy by a Lutheran Pastor; afterwards he received catechetical instruction in the Lutheran Catechism, was confirmed by a Lutheran pastor, and admitted to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. After he had, as a member of the Lutheran Church, lived in sin for a number of years, as was the case with the majority in those times, the Spirit of God awakened the truths he had learned in the catechism.

Of this he speaks himself as follows: "God extended his hand to me also in other ways, I had received instructions in early youth in the Christian religion. Then I could not comprehend, and did not experimentally realize the truth, still from that time there remained in me a reverence for God, though dim, yet it extended so far, that every place where God was worshipped became sacred to me, no matter in what way it was done. Reverence often prompted me to visit religious meetings and attentively listen to the teachings of the ministers." †

2. When he was already troubled about the condition of his soul, but was not yet willing to submit to God, sickness invaded his family and several of his children died with dysentery. Rev. ANTON HAUZ, a German Reformed minister, who was a mighty herald of repentance, preached the funeral sermons, which touched him deeply. "The word of God found way to his heart, which was already contrite, so that he was deeply impressed and became willing to seek the Lord immediately." ‡

After his conversion he was expelled from the Lutheran Church be-

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\*) See pp. 20, 21.

†) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, pp. 24, 25.

‡) See p. 23.

cause this work of conversion was denounced as fanaticism, yet he never disparaged the Churches of the Reformation. He deplored their moral deterioration in his part of the country, but wherever he discovered anything good he willingly acknowledged it.

3. The articles of faith of the Evangelical Association are taken from the thirty-nine articles of the Anglican Church, which latter are an abstract of the so-called "Augsburg Confession of Faith," and in many places agree verbally with them. That Confession is the palladium of Protestantism.

4. The hymn-books of the Evangelical Association contain the cream of the hymns of the Churches of the Reformation. In the beginning of this work the hymnbooks of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches were in use exclusively.

5. The "Apostolic Creed," which is the confession of faith of the General Christian Church, *is also the confession of the Evangelical Association*. It is incorporated into the formula for baptism, and every candidate for baptism is baptized upon this professed faith. It is also contained in the Evangelical Catechism, and is being taught and impressed upon the memories and minds of the rising generation.

Of these important and far-reaching points the learned Dr. Nevin evidently had not informed himself when he read the Evangelical Association out of the Christian Church. Instead of acquainting himself properly with that solid, modest, intelligent and soundly converted man of God, Jacob Albright, whom God called and thrust forward to show to his erring German brethren the way of salvation by repentance toward God, and faith in Christ,—he drew up a caricature and called it "Jacob Albright," of which he says at a certain place: "Albright had taken it into his head to make himself a name by founding a new denomination, acting like a self-conceited foolish youth, who would take hold of his pantaloons, in order to lift himself up." Similar stuff is still sometimes produced in our day, even by high-titled gentlemen who make a show of learning, but do not know the alphabet of the origin of the Evangelical Association. In course of time light may yet arise and shine upon them concerning this matter.

That the Evangelical Association stands connected in many ways with the Christian Church and the Church of the Reformation, cannot be gainsaid, but that she has no part in the so-called "apostolic succession," is by her cheerfully admitted.

#### § 61. The So-called "Apostolic Succession."

What then are we to understand by the pretentious phrase "Apostolic Succession?" Substantially expressed, it is the claim that the authority with which Christ is said to have invested the Apostles to preach the Gospel, to administer the sacraments, and to govern the Church, was by them transmitted, by laying on of hands and prayer, to such other persons as

they considered fit, and thereby ordained them as their successors ; furthermore, that this ordination was continued from the time of Peter and Paul, specifically, through an unbroken line of the bishops of Rome, until the present time ; only such preachers of the Gospel as stand in this Apostolic line of ordination had the claim to the promise of the Lord that he would be with them always, sanction their official acts, and hence their authority alone was to be recognized by this Church. Only *such* preachers constitute, according to this conception, a valid ministry, and they are the very bearers and pillars of the Church ; hence it follows that only such Churches as have such a ministry belong to the true General Christian Church.\*

That the ministry of the Evangelical Association does *not stand in this line* is historically correct. But where stand the ministries of other Protestant denominations in this respect, the Churches of the Reformation included ? Any student of Church history knows that, for instance, the assertion of Dr. Hook is a fiction, when he says : "Our ordinations (those of the Church of England) descend in a direct *unbroken line* from Peter and Paul, the apostles of the circumcision and the Gentiles. These great apostles successively ordained Linus, Cletus and Clement, bishops of Rome ; and the Apostolic succession was regularly continued from them to Celestine, Gregory, Vetalianus," etc.†

There is no shadow of proof extant that the apostle Peter ever was in Rome and there ordained any one. It is certain that the apostle Paul was there, but where is any intimation to be found that he ordained any one as his successor ? Church history confesses its uncertainty concerning Linus and Cletus.

The "Chain" lacks the sure connection at the very beginning. But let the connection for a moment be admitted, and that this ordination was continued through many centuries until the time of the Reformation by the unclean hands of the popes, and thus was also validly imparted to all of the bishops, priests and clergymen of the Roman papal Church, and hence also to those who afterwards took part in the Reformation. Then we come suddenly to a tremendous chasm which cannot be bridged over. The Roman Bishop—the Pope— by whose authority this "Apostolic Succession" was transmitted to such bishops and priests as Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Cranmer and many others, in Germany, Switzerland and England, excommunicated them afterwards, thus stripping them of their offices, dignity and authority, and not only put them back into the laity, but declared them to be heretics, expelled them and handed them over to the devil and eternal damnation, accompanied with terrible maledictions ! This curse was pronounced upon all who took part in the reformation of the sixteenth century, and it has never been revoked to the present day.

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\*) For full information on this subject see *Powell on Succession*.

†) Dr. Hook's *Two Sermons on the Church and the Establishment*.

Now it is perfectly certain that if the Pope could impart the "Apostolic Succession," he also had power to withdraw it. Why, he has the power to bind and to loosen, he has the "Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven," and can lock and unlock—it is asserted. And whosoever asserts the power of his authority concerning ordination must also acknowledge the effectiveness of his excommunication and curse. The one implies the other. Let any one who has the desire, attempt to build a bridge over this unbridgable chasm. For Protestants who rely upon "Apostolic Succession" it hardly amounts to a fable that has been cunningly devised, but it is both a *fateful* and a *ridiculous* one.

We repeat that the Evangelical Association cheerfully acknowledges that her ministerial ordination does not stand in this line. In reality the ministry of the Evangelical Association stands upon equal footing with regard to this "succession" with other protestant denominations, with this single, clear exception that she was never specially excommunicated and thus stripped of her ordination by the Pope, as were some others. Even from a high Church standpoint, considering the last mentioned fact, the ministry of the Evangelical Association would seem to stand upon a far more solid ground than those "Apostolic Successors" who have been excommunicated by the Roman Pontiff.

#### § 62. A Singular Attack.

Another attack upon the Evangelical Association concerning her right to be a Church was made, remarkably enough, in her own official Church organ, the *Evangelical Messenger*, in the year 1880. The editors of this paper tried to establish the assertion that the Evangelical Association is no Church in the sense of the New Testament (which is equal to being no Church at all), but only an Evangelical *Society*, as was clearly indicated by her name *Evangelical Association*, and that the Scriptures apply the name Church only to local congregations and also Christians in the aggregate, but that a *denomination* was never thus designated. The *Messenger* said literally: "Outside of the local Churches it is a misnomer to call any association of Christians either a Church or *the* Church. The Church is the entire body of true believers, a Church is simply a local society; and other organizations are simply associations. Among them we have been called the *Evangelical Association*. Could we better it, could we make it more Scriptural, more Evangelical, more truthful or more democratic by imitating the general error and also insisting upon calling ourselves a Church?"\*

But when the *Messenger* was driven to the wall on this point, it admitted that the Evangelical Association might, like other denominations, also be called a Church, because the designation Church was customary and convenient. On this point it said the following: "The Evangelical Association is a Church in the same sense as the Methodist, the Presbyterian,

\* ) *Evangelical Messenger*, July 13th, 1880.

the Lutheran and the various Christian denominations are Churches, and in no other. And in this sense, and as a matter of custom and convenience, we use the term as freely as anybody else.”\*

Both of the above quoted paragraphs are perfect in themselves, that is to say, they are not torn out of their connections as to sense. In the first paragraph the *Messenger* declared expressly that the Evangelical Association and other denominational organizations are *simply* associations and not Scriptural Churches, and hence the designation *Church* is a misnomer, and we are admonished not to imitate the general error by insisting upon calling the Evangelical Association a *Church*; but in the second paragraph it is admitted that the editors themselves “imitate the general error,” because it is customary and convenient! Yet by admitting that we are a Church in the same sense that other denominations are, whom they had already declared to be “simply associations,” and not Churches, their assertion that the Evangelical Association was “*simply* an association and not a Church,” was left standing in full force, and thus our Church was stripped entirely of its ecclesiastical character by its own Church organ!

The considerate readers of the paper soon saw that the position, that a denomination was not a Church, because not so called in the New Testament, was a perfect *non-sequitur*, because in the New Testament era the Church consisted mostly of missions and beginnings.

There was as yet no development into denominations or aggregations of local Churches, although the apostle Paul already grouped them together by countries, as for instance: “Churches of Galatia,” (1 Cor. 16, 1.), “Churches of Macedonia,” (2 Cor. 8, 1.)

It was also seen that that which had as yet no existence, could not be mentioned historically in the Bible. And, most of all, it was seen that when one local Christian society was already called a Church in the New Testament, an aggregation of many local Churches into one denomination would certainly not do away with the Church character, but *unite* and *concentrate* and thus strengthen it in the denomination.

The new-fangled idea was seen to be indefensible, and finding no other advocates, it perished in a short time in consequence of its own hollowness!†

### § 63. The Validity of the Ministerial Ordination of the Evangelical Association.

Is the ministerial ordination of this denomination actually valid? And is this association, not only by outward connection but also *essentially*, a part or branch of the General Christian Church?

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\*) *Evangelical Messenger*, Dec. 14th, 1880.

†) This matter was inserted here, out of its chronological order, because of its nature it belongs here, in juxtaposition with the other attacks upon our ecclesiastical status.

These questions are *life-questions* for this Church, and demand here and now a correct and exhaustive answer.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Head of the Church, is the Great Highpriest in whom the Church with all its rights and powers originates. He gives to every believer and withal to the aggregate of believers who are united with him and in him into his spiritual, mystical body, his life, which is eternal life, and therefrom results, under his operation and guidance, the outward development and formation of the Church. In this sense the apostle Paul writes to the Ephesians that Christ ascended on high and gave gifts to men, and designates part of these gifts as consisting in apostles, evangelists, pastors, teachers, etc, "for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."\* But how utterly unbiblical and improper is the thought that Christ had in the beginning of the Christian Church emptied himself of the fullness of these gifts and deposited them, as it were, with this "Apostolic Succession," so that these successors now possess the power to manage the arrangement of the ministry, and validate it by their ordination! No—Christ still possesses the same inexhaustible fullness of gifts and graces for the Church in all ages, and also communicates them to her as her manifold needs demand.

As the Church has her beginning and development, field of labor, conflicts, trials, and time of preparation *in this world*, in the midst of the kingdom of darkness, of hundreds of millions of fallen men, changes of times, nations and languages, and is outwardly subject to thousands of circumstances, changing relations and their influences—it is frequently the case that she becomes spiritually diseased and luke-warm, and even apostasy and separation from the Lord take place, as both the word of prophecy and the history of the Church abundantly teach. For this reason the Great Head of the Church interferes by processes of separation, purification, renovation and *restoration*. And in case the evil has rooted and settled itself so deeply and inveterately in the body and government of the Church that a separation and purification has become impossible, then the Lord will not hesitate, as biblical history teaches, even to employ a Nebuchadnezzar or a Titus to destroy His chosen city of Jerusalem, and abolish that worship which He Himself had instituted, because it has essentially been changed into a false, idolatrous performance, and rejects His chosen people, and calls them "Lo ammi" † because they have forsaken their God. Then He will select for His purposes other instruments, "raises children out of stones," ‡ and uses other builders to erect His temple, and accomplishes nevertheless, his counsel, although, on account of the disobedience of men, so to speak, in roundabout ways, yet wonderfully and gloriously.

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\*) Ephesians 4, 7-13.

†) Hosea 1. 9.

‡) Luke 3. 8.

Thus the Lord reigns and rules in the old and new dispensation. Such a crisis took place in the dark middle ages, when a bottomless depravity prevailed in the Church. Church government had morally become completely rotten and incompetent, and a reformation of "head and members" had become necessary. Then the Lord produced a new creation. He chose a poor miner's son, **MARTIN LUTHER**, and others, and accomplished through them a reformation. This was afterward repeated on a smaller scale in the Churches of Germany and England, when God employed men like Spener, Francke, Zinzendorf and Arndt in Germany, and Wesley, Fletcher, Whitefield and others in Great Britain, in order to repress formality, dead orthodoxy, and sins and crimes in the Church, and cause the life of Christ to flow again in her channels. And we hesitate not to add here that the Lord awakened and employed His servant Albright to check the moral ruination of the German Churches of Pennsylvania, and lead those people into the way of life, as we shall see further on in this history.

#### § 64. Further Elucidation of the Subject.

We continue the amplification of the answer to the life-question of our Church, now under consideration, and direct the reader to the great truth that the aggregate of believers constitute, in virtue of their union with Christ the true High Priest, the "Royal Priesthood,"\* The believer is *a partaker of Christ*. Through Him, who is the Son of God, he possesses sonship; through Him, who is King over all, he is also made a king; through Him, who is the victor, he is also victorious; through Him, who is the glorified heir of all things, he will also become glorified, and be made a joint heir with Christ; and through Him, who is the Great High Priest, he has also been made a priest. Thus, the "Royal Priesthood" of believers is in its original form a participation in the priesthood of Christ, and stands above all other forms, successions and traditions, because it is grounded, independently of all these, in the everlasting Highpriesthood, after the order of Melchisedec.

If, then, in the course of time, the outward Church becomes so radically depraved that she rejects true believers and live Christians, and thus the outward "successive" ordination of *godly* ministers becomes impossible, or other preventing circumstances prevail, but the continuation of a true Gospel ministry has become imperatively necessary, then this spiritual, royal priesthood has the undoubted right through Christ, and He, as the Head of the body and Lord over all, will guide them into that direction—to ordain and consecrate to the ministry of the Gospel, such persons as Providence and the Holy Spirit indicate, as was the case with Rev. Jacob Albright.

And, after all, everything depends upon the sanction and blessing of the divine-human Head and Lord of the Church. Did not the apostle

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\*) 1 Peter 2. 9.

Paul, in reply to those who denied his divine call and the validity of his office, invariably point to his spiritual children whom he, by divine grace, had led from Satan and sin to God, as the seals of his office? Does he not write to the Hebrews (2. 4.) that the divine certification to His true servants consists in the "gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his will"? Now, it is an undeniable fact that the glorious Lord Jesus Christ has greatly blessed the ministry of the Evangelical Association in the persons of Albright and hundreds of his successors in the ministry; He has confirmed and sealed it by the conversion of tens of thousands of immortal souls. What further testimony could be needed? Or will any one undertake to show that the Lord committed a mistake in this matter?

In conclusion:—In the midst of thick moral darkness in the Church, Albright was awakened immediately by the Holy Spirit and mediately through the written Word and the preaching of it, and brought to the Lord. After having followed the Lord, in the Methodist Episcopal Church, a few years, the divine call came to him, clearly and unmistakably, to bring the Gospel to the neglected Germans in his vicinage. The Lutheran Church rejected him, the Methodist Church gave him a license as exhorter, but rejected the idea of entering upon the German field or establishing a German work. When the divine call led Albright into this great field, he thereby lost his membership in the Methodist Church, which at that time made membership dependent upon the regular attendance of the class-meeting. God bestowed His blessing upon his labors in the awakening and conversion of sinners, and these converts were tenderly attached to him as their spiritual father, but were mostly expelled from their own churches. Albright thus found himself under the necessity of becoming their pastor and spiritual leader, which induced him to organize them into a few classes. The leading men of this little flock soon perceived the necessity of a still more perfect organization, and furnished Albright also with an outward authority and certification as their pastor and preacher, but as under prevailing circumstances it was impossible to obtain an ordained preacher from any denomination to ordain Albright,\* they ordained and consecrated him to this office themselves, with earnest prayer and laying on of hands, and God has added *his* blessing to that solemn act until this day. This was an act of the "Royal Priesthood," under the guidance of Providence and the Holy Spirit. *In this line stands the ministerial ordination of the Evangelical Association!* Can it be necessary to present any further argument in its defense? Nay, verily not! And in consideration of all the aforementioned historical facts and fundamental truths, which condition the Church in its

\* ) The authorities of the M. E. Church did not approve of his labors among the Germans, and the United Brethren had not yet introduced formal ordination among themselves. As late as October 2d, 1813, Rev. Otterbein performed the first ordination by prayer and laying hands upon the Brethren Newcomer, Hoffman and Schaffer. *Life of Otterbein*, pp. 356-360.

origination, existence, and development, it will not be a difficult task for the candid reader to see *that the Evangelical Association is in all respects a real, essential branch of the Christian Church.*

We yet add here what Rev. William W. Orwig says on this subject: "If the presumption of the privilege of a regular *succession* in the ministry by ordination down from the apostles, were no fable, or if its existence and necessity could be proven from the Bible or the history of the Church, then the Evangelical Association would indeed have no valid claims to churchship and the validity of her ministry. But in this respect she has nothing to fear, though there are some narrow-minded, bigoted sectarians, who envy her rapid progress and increasing influence, deny her the character of a Church and declare the ministrations of her preachers null and void. But if each branch of the Church Universal had to prove an apostolic, uninterrupted and sacred succession, in order to confirm the validity of its existence and ministry, then all would come under the same sweeping condemnation of the above-mentioned arrogant sectarians, and they themselves would be compelled to lay their hands upon their mouths, and remain quiet forever. The good success which hitherto has attended the operations of the Evangelical Association is *alone* sufficient evidence that the ordination of her ministers is valid before God, notwithstanding all the objections that may be urged to the contrary."\*

But, generally speaking, successive ordination is to be highly respected as conducive to proper order and discipline in the Church. Any one who from motives of selfishness or recklessness disregards such order, and sets up a party for himself, is to be regarded and treated as a disturber and sectarian.† When, however, the Church has become so depraved and ungodly that she refuses to ordain men whom God has called, and even expels such, then the principle must prevail: "Life is more than meat." —(Matt. 6, 25.); viz., The true life of the Church and immortal souls is of more value than *this* ordination, which principle is also implied in this passage: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." (Mark 2, 27.) The true life of the Church is infinitely more important than any of its forms or traditions, therefore, in cases of *indispensable necessity*, in order to save this life, we are not bound to a close observance of them.

#### § 65. A Sterile Soil and Little Fruit.

During the years 1802–3 Albright labored mostly in the counties Berks, Bucks, and Northampton, but that section of country was at that time hard ground and the results were apparently meager. The servants of the Lord sowed the seed of the Word accompanied with many tears, but after many years a joyful harvest followed.

\* Orwig's *History of the Evangelical Association*, pp. 23, 24.

† See the XVIII. Article of Faith in *Evangelical Discipline*

Indeed the work seemed almost to die out, as was the case with the countries where Christianity was established at first. The people seemed to become more hardened and blinded in sin than they were before, which induced one of the preachers to make the remark: "*It seems as if the devil had here measured off a tract of ground for himself!*" For a long time this region lay almost desolate, so far as the operations of the Evangelical Association were concerned, and when, subsequently, attempts were made to preach the pure doctrine of the Bible, the combined forces of hell and the ungodly nominal Christians and false teachers rose in vehement opposition, so that the Evangelical preachers were frequently in danger of their lives. But in spite of all persecution and embarrassments the truth achieved, in later years, glorious victories, as we shall yet see.

**§ 66. Pressing in a Northwesterly Direction. — A New Circuit is Formed.**

The circumstances just mentioned induced Albright and his co-laborers to turn in a northwesterly direction. They found entrance and open doors in the counties of Northumberland and Center etc., and their labors were crowned with great success. They formed a new circuit in 1804, which was called Shamokin at first, but was afterward named Northumberland, and was jointly served by Revds. John Walter and Abraham Liesser. Albright had previously visited these parts and scattered the good seed of the Word, attended with great blessing. His excellent and noble demeanor, in connection with his powerful preaching, made a blessed impression. His intercourse with the people was so loving and attractive that nearly everybody whose acquaintance he made became attached to him. The older members of the Church, who survived him many years, even in their old age spoke enthusiastically of his appearance and labors among them.

**§ 67. Albright and Spangler.**

Among these fathers we mention especially CHRISTOPHER SPANGLER, of Brush Valley, Center County, Pa. Concerning him we insert a few paragraphs from "Albright and his Co-laborers," as follows: "During the year 1805 Albright traveled through Center County, Pennsylvania, and stopped in the town of Millheim, with a Mr. Bachmann. Mr. Bachmann soon saw that there was another spirit in this man, different from that of their pastor. Bachmann gave him permission to preach in his house. In the interval a man by the name of Christopher Spangler, of Brush Valley, came to Bachmann's house. He was told what kind of a man Mr. Albright was, whereupon Spangler said: 'Tell him to come and preach at my place also.' When Albright came to Spangler's house, which was not quite finished, while taking off his overcoat he said: 'Why you are building a fine house, but if you were to be converted things would become yet much finer among you.' This was a sort of introductory address to Spangler. — The sermon made such an impression on Spangler, that he soon began to

seek the Lord and ere long found peace in the blood of Christ. Afterward a class was formed there, of which Spangler became the leader. Later he became a local preacher. Spangler was sorely persecuted, but he clung so firmly to Jesus and was also so strongly attached to Albright, that nothing moved him. Even in old age he spoke with special appreciation of Albright as his spiritual father."\* Many respectable people were converted in these parts of the country who became pillars in the Church. The following were among the first preaching places on the new circuit: Abraham Eyer, John Aurand, Michael Meesz, Dreisbach's Church, Martin Dreisbach, sen., Philip Heu, Henry Schmidt, Jacob Hoch, John Schwarz, Carl Straub. Albright also obtained another assistant: Alexander Jameson, whom he brought to this circuit to help the other preachers.

### § 68. Frequent Change of Preachers.

The first preachers of the Evangelical Association did not always remain a whole year on a circuit, as was also the case with the first Methodist preachers that came to America. They were often changed during the year by the order of Albright, probably that they might the sooner become acquainted with the whole work and the people become acquainted with them. The circumstances and demands of the work and times were so peculiar and different from the present that we can hardly form an adequate idea of them.

On the "old circuit," east of the Susquehanna river, the number increased slowly, but persecution became fiercer. It was greatly to their advantage that the newly-added members were soundly converted, cleaving to the Lord with all their heart. Half-hearted and hypocritical professors could not endure the heat of opposition; only the gold could endure the fiery trial of persecution.

### § 69. Small Salaries.

For the first time [1805] we find any mention of the amount of the salary of preachers. The contributions were divided in equal shares and the portion of each preacher consisted of the remarkable sum of \$15.30. From the report it appears that Albright received the same amount as the others. John Walter obtained permission to collect specially for the purchase of a horse. He gathered for this purpose \$37.33.—On this point let it be observed:

1. In those days the people were generally poor in money. The country recovered very slowly from the very depressing effects of the revolutionary war.

2. The collection of contributions was not as yet regulated at all.

3. The contributions averaged nevertheless \$1.25 per member.

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\*) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, p. 94.

4. The horses of preachers were kept mostly free of expense, and the preachers themselves generally boarded free.

5. Preachers lived very economically and clothed themselves plainly and inexpensively.

6. Preachers were governed by such an intense earnestness for saving souls and the extension of the work of the Lord that they scarcely thought of matters of salary. *This last fact should be laid to heart above all others.*

#### § 70. More Rapid Progress.

During the year 1805 there was better progress. Doors were opened in Lancaster and Dauphin Counties. Northumberland circuit was extended into the Counties of Mifflin and Huntingdon. The increase of members was about 35, and the whole number was 75. Still quite a number of awakened persons did not yet join the society because of the fiery persecution; and in Lancaster County the sentiment that an organized and disciplined Church was a "yoke of bondage," largely obtained among awakened and praying people.

Albright and Walter received equal shares from the contributions this year. Walter again received permission to collect \$18.67 for the purchase of a horse. For Alexander Jameson \$66.67 was raised (he seemed to have been especially poor), and permission given him to collect \$69.33 for the purchase of a horse. It should be mentioned here that it required a good horse in those times to carry a preacher and his saddle-bags daily great distances over bad roads and in all kinds of weather.

#### § 71. Early Departure of Bro. Abraham Liesser.

During this year that promising young preacher ABRAHAM LIESSER departed this life. He was a humble, pious and useful man. Why his early taking off? Who can answer the mysterious question? Probably he had overexerted himself. There were at that time so many exhausting hardships and severities to go through that many—even Albright himself, afterwards—had a worse experience than Epaphroditus, (Phil. 2, 27-30.)

The preachers became *sacrifices* to the work. But the Lord provided for the small band a fresh, valiant hero, whose energy gave the work a powerful impetus.

#### § 72. George Miller's Conversion and Call to the Ministry.

This strong man of God, George Miller, born in Pottstown, Montgomery County, Pa., and raised in Alsace, Berks Co., was a millwright by profession, and a miller too. He had been in a penitent state for some time. When he heard Jacob Albright preach in 1799, on the text: "Behold I set before you the way of life and the way of death," (Jer. 21, 8.) Miller says, "I was so wrought upon by his powerful sermon, that if I had not seized

hold of a table, I should have fallen to the floor. After the sermon I conversed with him. His exhortation was short, but powerful. He said, 'You must pray earnestly, humble yourself, take the cross of Christ upon you, and believe with the heart, then you will soon find peace.' The next day I accompanied him to his appointment and heard him preach again and when we separated I requested him to pray for me." But Miller struggled on in this condition until 1802, when Albright visited him and prayed so powerfully with him and his family that he "was moved to tears." He went with Albright next day and heard him preach so powerfully and with such great liberty, that he became convinced that he could do this only by the grace of God assisting him. Deeply affected by this sermon, he again finally resolved to seek God with all his heart. He now requested Albright to preach in his house, and an appointment was made. How he was finally delivered out of the horrible pit of sin he relates as follows :

"In the meantime (until Albright's appointment) I prayed a great deal, beseeching God in my closet for the forgiveness of my sins.

"The grief of my soul was so great that I had the appearance of being sick, nothing in the world affording me any pleasure. I had only hungering and thirsting for the grace of God in the pardon of my sins. \* \* \* On June 3rd, 1802, I wept and prayed all day while engaged at my work, walking back and forth in my mill, frequently falling upon my knees in prayer, calling to God for help, and vowed to serve Him only, whatever might be the consequences.

"As I thus gave myself entirely to God through faith, to serve Him alone. I was permitted in the evening to have a glimpse of the saving mercy of God's grace.

"By faith I saw God looking upon me, and while beholding his gracious countenance a stream of his love flowed into my soul, and I was certain that God was surely my friend and I his accepted child. Yea, I was so quickened by the reception of his grace, and pervaded by such peaceful, sweet and happy emotion, that I could not refrain from praising my Redeemer for his great mercy and love.

"That night I could sleep without any cares, joyfully resting in Christ. The following morning there was a great change indeed. The heavens and the earth seemed new. The Scriptures had become a divinely quickening power ; yea, to me all things appeared as if they increased my happiness, for God had become *my friend*. Glory be to God on high for his love and mercy." \*

It is evident from this brief narrative that Miller's conversion was not a superficial one, but was deep and radical. During his long penitential struggle he diligently searched the Scriptures and dugged down through mere human rubbish until he found the rock of salvation, upon which he

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\*) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, pp. 187, 188.

could stand firmly, and the Lord gave him, instead of lamentations, "a new song in his mouth, even praises unto God." \*

Miller having opened his house for Albright and his helpers to preach, the Word of God had a blessed effect, some others were converted, a class was formed and Miller was made its leader. He also attended the "council" in 1803 and took an active part in its transactions. He soon felt an inward call to preach the Gospel so strongly that he had no rest until he entered the Gospel vineyard, and placed himself—as an Evangelical saying has it—"upon the walls of Zion." Another beautiful Evangelical phrase originated probably with Bro. Miller,—When speaking of the great joy and blessedness he realized after he experienced the pardon of his sins he based it upon this fact: "*For God was my friend.*" When afterward he was severely tried, and in a meeting obtained the victory, he joyously exclaimed, "*God is my friend.*" This remarkable phrase became proverbial, and was adopted in class-meetings and love-feasts, and has been in use in Pennsylvania-German circles of the Church until this day, to express a conscious state of Divine favor.

### § 73. Miller Becomes an Itinerant Preacher.

When he entered upon his calling as a traveling preacher, Mr. Albright accompanied him for a few days through parts of the country that were strange to him, but after ten days he was directed to travel alone and look up new preaching places in Lancaster County.† He prayed and wept much in secret, in the forest and elsewhere, that sinners might be converted. Sometimes he had to sleep out-doors, using his saddle for a pillow, whilst his hungry horse sought pasture in a field. He was entertained by a man named Lescher, in Lancaster County, several miles southerly of the well-known "Mühlbach"—the place where the Albright Church now stands. Lescher gave him permission to preach in his house. Among the many visitors who came to hear the new preacher were also George Becker and others from Mühlbach, and a number were converted to God, Miller was then invited to preach at Mühlbach, where a revival took place and a class was formed. This was the beginning of the work at this place, which became quite important in the history of the Church.

A corroborative report of the beginning of the work at Mühlbach was found among the posthumous papers of GEORGE BECKER, who was one of the first members of the Church at that place. He makes the following statements :

"The Evangelical preacher Jacob Albright and his co-laborer George Miller came into the neighborhood called Schwamm (Swamp), in Lancaster County, Pa., a few miles south of Mühlbach, in the year 1805. (See

\*) Psalm 40.

†) Already at that time and for many years afterward young preachers had to do pioneer missionary work.

also "Albright and his Co-laborers, pp. 200-202) and Miller preached at that place in the house of JACOB LESCHER. Many people came to hear the new preacher and a number became convinced that his doctrine was from God and that the preacher was a servant of the Lord. After a few sermons at Lescher's an awakening began. CATHARINE BECKER, of Mühlbach, was awakened and called mightily upon God till she was blessed with the pardon of sin and praised God with a loud voice. The devil now became angry, because a soul had been rescued. All this was something quite new to the people in our neighborhood. Bro. JOHN LEFFLER then opened his house for preaching and there Albright and Miller obtained a permanent preaching-place. Bro. Leffler was already converted to God, and his wife was penitent and later on also obtained the victory of salvation.

"FREDERICK BECKER came to me at least three times, saying: 'Oh, come, George, and hear our new preacher!' I promised. In two weeks should be preaching at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. I went to my brother SAMUEL BECKER, and asked him, whether he would not go with me to hear the new preacher. He consented, and we went. The sermon was powerful and many hearts were touched. On returning home I asked my brother: 'What do you think of this preacher?' whereupon he answered: 'This world is very wicked, and these preachers don't come by chance—God has sent them.' I and my brother became much attached to this sort of preaching by Albright and Miller, and I said to my brother: 'You had better permit these preachers to hold meetings in your house.' But he answered, as he was a deacon in his Church it was not expedient for him to take the meeting into his house, 'but,' he added, 'it would suit very well for you to take it, you had better do it.' Upon this I did not answer much, I was willing enough, but there was *somebody else* who made me timid. But we diligently attended the meetings. At one time, when the meeting was to be in the Swamp, it was a rainy day and we had visitors, but I prepared to go to the meeting, when my wife said to the visitors: 'George has discovered a new meeting in the Swamp, and he thinks that he must be there every time'—and then added, speaking to me: 'Do tell those preachers to come and preach here too.' This was exactly what I desired. So I told the preacher to make an appointment at my house, which he did. But later on my wife did not want the meeting any more. When I reported this to Bro. Albright, he said, 'Oh—the woman will yet be converted; I will go into the house and talk with her.' When he came out from the interview he told me, 'she has consented to have preaching again; and now, George, at such a time—there will be meeting here again at 10 A. M., and in the afternoon and evening. There will be four preachers here on their way to a big meeting.'

"Upon the appointed time came Jacob Albright, John Walter, George Miller—the fourth I cannot now recollect. Several converted friends also

attended, and also the neighbors. The preachers proclaimed the Gospel, attended with the power from on high, and the Lord put his mighty hand to the work, so that sinners cried mightily to Him for the pardon of their sins—and I, George Becker, also obtained the divine peace. Blessed be the Lord! Whether others also found grace I cannot tell, but when the power of God came upon the meeting with such force many sinners fled from the house, and even left behind some of their clothes, shoes, etc. Here also, as in the Acts of the Apostles, the inquiry was heard: "What meaneth this?"

"*Julianna Leffler* was also there, but went home in the evening; when John Leffler arrived at home he spoke to her, but received no answer. Then he fell upon his knees and prayed to God for his wife that He might show mercy to her; then he arose, but fell on his knees again, and wrestled in prayer for her. Now the adversary was conquered, and she leaped out of bed and exclaimed: 'The devil must flee!' And the enemy did flee, and the grace of God was poured into her heart, so that she began to sing, and shouted and praised God.

"From this time forth there was preaching in my house. The work of God went forward. Sinners were converted, a class was formed, and Bro. John Leffler was elected classleader. He then received a certificate from Bro. Albright to this effect: 'Now I give to John Leffler the right to hold class-meetings and exhort, so long as he conducts himself *properly*. *Jacob Albright.*'"

*John Kleinfelter* has also copied a notice, which Rev. John Walter sent (no date) to the classleader, John Leffler, as follows: "I hereby inform you that I will stay at Samuel Becker's this evening, and I wish you would come together in an *evening meeting*, for God is working wonders in Samuel Becker's house. I wish you would bring the class-record along. John Walter." This meeting was evidently intended to be a *class-meeting*.

George Miller proved himself, as it were, another Elijah, full of holy fire and burning zeal. He preached with power, and not like unto the spiritually dead "scribes" of his time. He was also gifted with executive talents.

#### § 74. The Work Becomes Influential.

This movement now began to penetrate society, and exerted a marked influence among the German people; the children of God took new courage and prayed with redoubled earnestness and faith, but the enemies also raged more madly. The Evangelical heralds of repentance and conversion went like burning and shining lights through the eastern counties of Pennsylvania. They showed the people their deeply fallen condition and the wretchedness of sin in the hearts of men and of the churches. They cried aloud and spared not: "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out!" John Walter sometimes preached for two hours on the last judgment until sinners trembled and cried out: "God, be merciful, or I am

lost!" Albright frequently preached with such unction and power that persons sank upon their knees and cried to God for deliverance; and Miller — a veritable "Son of Thunder",\* — proclaimed the Word with such power that some of his hearers, even such as had been the greatest enemies, and had come to cause disturbance, fell to the ground as if dead, and afterward prayed for mercy. In their preaching they freely made use of the Word of God, catechisms, hymn-books, etc., to convince the people. They prepared themselves for preaching with much prayer and searching of the Scriptures, and then the Word came forth from their mouths sharper than a two-edged sword and had its effect, in accordance with Hebrews 4, 12. 13. and Isaiah 55, 11.

Learned, but unconverted, and hence spiritually blind parsons, began to perceive that these "unlearned and ignorant"† men would tear away their rotten foundation, and commenced to sound the alarm-trumpet from their pulpits: "Ho, ye dear people, awake! — awake! Seducers and false prophets have come among you who will cause you to fall away from the faith. You have sworn to your Church, but these rovers want to seduce you, and if you permit yourselves to be misled by them you become perjurers and covenant-breakers, and you will be lost forever and ever! These vagabonds sneak into your houses and first of all capture your weak women, as the apostle says. We must fight, or these 'Strawelers' will take away our place and nation."

#### § 75. Expressions from Satan's Dictionary.

The epithet "Straweler" (strugglers), which the enemies of the work invented, can not be found in any German dictionary; it is evidently a Pennsylvania-German word which became in the mouth of the people and in their imagination, the expression and sum total of all that is contemptible.‡ A "Straweler", that is to say, a person who repented, forsook sin and sinful company, was converted and saved, and glorified God, etc., would be expelled from the Church; he was hated and dreaded more than the devil himself; he would be stigmatized as being a "Knierutscher, Kopfhänger, Schwärmer, Krächzer, Heuchler,"§ etc., and the praying people collectively were called with strong emphasis: "*these miserable people!*" Among the masses of the unconverted and ignorant this had great effect; the consequences of such popular hatred and prejudice were very unpleasant, and frequently resulted in dangerous attacks and riotous scenes.

Rev. William W. Orwig writes the following concerning the rise of the word "Straweler": "The origin of this abhorrible term, formerly so often

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\*) Mark 3, 17.

†) Acts 4, 14.

‡) A certain parson once tried to tell how bad those "Strawelers" were, and in his haste used this self-condemnatory expression: "They are as little converted as I am!"

§) Some of these epithets are untranslatable. The reader may get at their meaning by the following: Knee-sliders, head-hangers, fanatics, groaners, hypocrites.

applied in this country to Methodists, the members of the Evangelical Association and other zealous Christians, we have not been able to trace. But it is in all probability of American origin, and derived from the German word 'Strampeln,' which means to *struggle with the feet*, etc. Enemies and scoffers of zealous and active Christianity may have taken occasion to apply this term to them from the fact that in the meetings, under the powerful preaching of the first Methodist preachers in this country, as also of the preachers of the Evangelical Association and others, sinners were often seized with fear and terror, and being wrought upon by the power of God, frequently fell involuntarily to the ground, and under a deep sense of their lost and wretched condition and danger, like many on the day of Pentecost under the preaching of Peter, they exclaimed inquiring what they must do to be saved, wringing their hands, struggling with their feet, and making other violent gestures, and when it pleased God to remove from them the burden of their sins, and to give them peace and consolation, they sometimes leaped for joy, burst out into shouting and praising God, and gave vent to the joy of their hearts by clapping their hands. Now such wrestling, similar to that of Jacob with the Angel of the Covenant, to enter in at the strait gate, such tears of penitence, like those of the back-slidden Peter, or of the great female sinner at the feet of Jesus, and others being under the sense of guilt appeared to an ignorant church populace and their blind leaders as not only foolish but even absurd and blasphemous. Hence like blind Saul, they thought to do God service by despising, slandering, and persecuting his children and followers. Yet it sometimes happened that some of the greatest scoffers and persecutors were seized, and before they were aware of it, were so completely overpowered that they fell to the ground as if struck by lightning, and were unable to rise again, until after a severe struggle and earnest prayer, by faith in the Son of God they had obtained the pardon of their sins, whereupon they praised God with joyful hearts, to the utter astonishment and confusion of their former comrades and associates. Such occurrences then gave rise to the foolish notions of some, who believed that the preachers of these people understood magic, and were able to charm persons by looking at them, especially those of weaker constitutions, and particularly females, because they, generally, are neither so obdurate and hardened, nor so rebellious as men. Others fancied that the preachers secretly scattered a mysterious powder over the hearers, whereby the weaker were made to fall down, to cry out, to struggle, to clap their hands, to leap, etc. Others again being ashamed of these foolish notions of ignorance and superstition, especially some carnally-minded *clergymen* and some *medical wiseacres* accounted for these phenomena on other principles. They either ascribed them to hypnotism or the occult agency of the devil and wicked spirits, or else represented these manifestations as being hypochondriacal and hysterical. But admitting this explanation another difficulty arises, namely, the fact that persons in whom these phenomena have taken place,

and still take place, had never before been afflicted with these diseases ! Such quacks in spiritual matters might indeed have been fitly answered in the words of our Saviour, addressed to the Sadducees : "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."

Both history and experience teach that similar phenomena take place, to a greater or less extent, during all great and true religious revivals, especially in this country. This was the case during the great revival in New England in the times of Jonathan Edwards ; during the great awakenings brought about by the first Methodist preachers in Virginia, Maryland, the Carolinas and other States, as well as that in the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches, and it still occurs in our times.—Especially did this take place under the powerful preaching of Messrs. John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield.\* And in those German Churches of our land, in which revivals were suffered to take place, great care had to be taken, or rather the Spirit of God had to be quenched, in order to prevent such phenomena. But then, the consequence of such decorous proceedings was, that these revivals, conducted after the rules and regulations of men, as to codes of propriety, were necessarily superficial and of short duration, the power of God being restrained, and did more harm than good. For this reason also, they have come into great disrepute, and are now carefully avoided in said Churches.

Far be it from us to justify all extravagant demonstrations, and bodily exercises, either during revivals or other religious meetings. It is highly probable that, to the injury of the genuine work of the Spirit, spurious elements have at all times mingled with it ; but he who is too much afraid of 'wild-fire' is in danger of mistaking the *genuine* for such, and to come to that zone of the moral heavens where he must freeze to death. Notwithstanding this, preachers and officers of the Church cannot guard too carefully against everything spurious and excessive, during revivals and other religious meetings." †

#### § 76. George Miller Presses Victoriously Onward.

"But if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it," ‡ once said Rabbi Gamaliel, and this word was now again fulfilled. In the year 1806 the work expanded considerably on the "old circuit" east of the Susquehanna river. At Mühlbach, Tulpehocken and the "Schwamm," glorious revivals took place and respectable classes were formed. Also at Paxton, near Harrisburg, a class was established. George Miller labored the greater

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\*) Also during the remarkable awakening in Ireland, in 1856-57, which spread also over England, Scotland, etc. Such outward phenomena appeared frequently and very remarkably.

†) Orwig's *History of the Evangelical Association*, pp. 29-31.

‡) Acts 5, 39.

part of the year—about eight months—alone on the Northumberland circuit. Alexander Jameson, however, left the work and located, on account of family affairs. Albright and Walter sometimes came over to assist Miller at “big meetings.”

How this young hero (Miller) went to work on his extensive field of labor is very instructive and edifying. He was a man who “mastered the situation,” and fully understood the work and its difficulties, and as he had been for a short time before on this circuit, he was well acquainted with its circumstances. “I therefore resolved,” says he, “to begin the work with fasting and prayer, and by the assistance of God, and without hypocrisy, to preach the truth of the Gospel, even though I should not gain the favor of any person, only so that God was satisfied with me. Consequently I prayed often from one appointment to another, that I might please God, and be useful to my fellow-men. And to the praise of His name I dare say that I have not labored in vain, for I often preached with much grace and divine power.” \*

To this Rev. William W. Orwig remarks: “He who commences and continues his labors in such a frame of mind, and with so deep an interest in the salvation of his fellow-beings, surely his labors in the vineyard of the Lord cannot fail to prosper.” †

A few extracts from Miller's autobiography will show very clearly what success he had. On the 25th of October, 1806, a “big meeting” was to commence at Martin Dreisbach's, sen., in Buffalo Valley. Albright and Walter were also expected to attend. How intensely Miller desired that success for the Kingdom of God and the salvation of souls might be secured through this meeting is evident from his own statement: “I expected that the penitents and newly converted, about forty in number, whom I had organized into classes, would be present at this meeting. I prayed much that the Lord might send the brethren Albright and Walter, endowed with divine power to edify these people. On the appointed day both the preachers and the people were present, and also many seekers. My feelings cannot be described, for I both sorrowed and rejoiced. I experienced the truth of the remarkable words of the Lord: ‘Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.’ I mourned with the penitent, and yet I rejoiced in the consolations of the grace of God. I was appointed to preach the first sermon. During preaching, the power of God came upon the people, so that many fell upon their knees and cried for mercy. Albright and Walter preached with great power and plainness, so that finally the congregation was visited with a powerful outpouring of the Spirit of God, and sinners could be heard calling upon God in every room of the house. In all parts

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\*) Albright and his Co-laborers, pp. 221, 222.

†) Orwig's *History*, etc. p. 32.

of the house there was also heard the voice of thanksgiving and praise, for there was great joy in the Lord among the brethren."\*

"Soon after this meeting," says Miller, further, "a general revival broke out on my circuit, and no opposition of man could hinder it, so that after two months there were already *over eighty* newly converted persons within my borders. The Lord had also given me some co-laborers, who exhorted very fervently, and in the power of God, and many houses were opened for holding divine service. God had so blessed me with faith-power, that when I prayed with seekers they sank to the floor, and for hours lay in an apparently unconscious condition."†

Such agonizing prayer for souls, such fearless preaching of the whole counsel of God, without respect of persons, such devotion to the work of the Lord will produce anywhere and at all times more or less of these blessed results. Ought not every Evangelical preacher imitate this excellent example?

#### § 77. A Written Covenant.

These three remarkable men of God—Albright, Walter and Miller—were already intimately united in "fighting the battles of the Lord" against Satan and sin, but they deemed it proper to establish their union also in a formal manner and thereby make it stronger still. Of this Miller says: "Albright, Walter and myself renewed on the 27th of October, our covenant, still more earnestly to prosecute the work of the Lord, by a short, written contract. Bro. Albright admonished and encouraged us to continue our work courageously and fearlessly, and lead as many sinners to Christ as possible."‡

It was in perfect order that after such prayers and labors Bro. Miller could at the close of his labors for eight months on the circuit, report more

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\*) In the year 1845 John Dreisbach, who had attended this meeting as a young man, wrote as follows: "Albright, Walter and Miller, preached in the power and demonstration of the Spirit. It was like rapidly succeeding showers of rain, attended by vivid lightning and mighty thunder, which shake up everything. Many souls became willing to call upon God for mercy, and many received divine comfort. The love of God was shed abroad in many hearts, and they shouted a loud Hallelujah to their heavenly Redeemer. Oh, my heart becomes kindled anew by the heavenly flame at the recollection of that heavenly time! Oh how many dear children of God, who were present at that meeting are already above, where they praise God and wait for our coming!"

†) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, p. 227.

‡) How solemn and blessed were the meetings of these servants of God! And how excellent also and how remarkable was their *written covenant*, to prosecute the work of the Lord with still greater earnestness, although they had hitherto already devoted themselves entirely to it. What an example for Evangelical ministers at their assemblies. If at Quarterly Meetings, Camp-meetings and Annual Conferences, ministers would thus solemnly unite to prosecute God's work, who could calculate the blessed results that would spring therefrom?

than one hundred saved members on his field. The apostle Paul regarded his spiritual children as being his honor and joy, yea his crown. He who desires to wear such a crown, let him pray and labor as did Paul and Miller. Increased statistics of *this kind* will cause joy, not only on earth, but also among the angels before the Throne.

At this time the Association had only three itinerant ministers, namely, Albright, Walter and Miller; but there were now four local preachers: Charles Bissey, Jacob Phillips, Solomon Miller and John Dreisbach; the latter was a promising young man in his seventeenth year, who afterwards became one of the leading men in this Church.

#### § 78. Subsidiary Contributions.

No definite regulation for collecting funds for the support of the preachers had as yet been adopted, the friends giving voluntarily, in the broadest sense of the word, their mites for this purpose. But now a special arrangement was made for this matter by taking up a subsidiary collection, which was done by subscribing and paying an optional sum for the wants of the preachers, and also for the *poor* in the Church. These preachers were willing even to be classed with the poor.

This collection was continued many years, but later it was taken up for the preachers exclusively. It was still in vogue when this writer joined the Church (1836), but was dropped soon after, and other arrangements were made. During this year the brethren came to the conclusion that it would facilitate the work to hold Annual Conferences in the future.

#### § 79. The Original Conference.

The year 1807 was in many respects a very important year for the Association. The Original Conference was held, and thereby the *history and era of Conferences* commenced in this Church. Up to this time the affairs of the preachers and the membership were directed by Albright, though mostly after consulting the preachers and leading men at "big meetings." But the work was spreading, and the concerns of the Church increasing, and hence it was felt that the time for holding Annual Conferences had come.

In the month of November, 1807, the first Conference of the Evangelical Association was held, and represented the entire work of that time. Being the only Conference in the Church, and legislating for the whole Church, this Conference embodied in itself the Quarterly, Annual and General Conferences, for the time being. The session took place in the house of SAMUEL BECKER, at Mühlbach, then Dauphin County, Pa., now Kleinfeltersville, Lebanon County, Pa. The Conference consisted of all the officers of the Church, itinerant ministers, local preachers, classleaders and

exhorters; viz., 5 itinerant preachers, 3 local preachers, 20 class-leaders and exhorters – 28 in all.

“What a joy it must have been for this little band of brethren to be thus assembled in singleness of heart, and in the fear of the Lord, for the purpose of deliberating upon the best means to prosecute successfully the work committed to their charge. But we can also in some measure conceive how great their embarrassment must have been, to transact their business without any rules as a guide, and without experience in such matters. It seems, however, they were led in their arrangements mainly by circumstances and exigencies; and as they deeply imbibed the principle that everything depends on God’s blessing, they looked up to Him in full confidence, and prayed that He might assist and prosper them in their work.”\*

The Association up to this time had not even adopted a name. The salvation of souls was their chief concern, for this was the work to which these men of God knew themselves to have been divinely called. The outward organization or arrangement was a secondary matter, as the directions of Providence and the pressure of circumstances would indicate.

Neither had they adopted any Church Discipline nor Articles of Faith. Although the council of 1803 had declared the Holy Scriptures, as their rule of doctrine, faith and practice, experience had taught them that it would be desirable as well as advantageous for the successful progress of the Church to have a well-arranged synopsis of Christian doctrines, duties of Christians, Church government, etc.

It seems, moreover, that the preachers had as yet received no formal or official licenses, because no Conference had yet been held. Albright himself had received a good attestation from the council in 1803, and he gave to his co-laborers written testimony of their standing, as he regarded it proper, but this could not always remain thus. These and other matters had to be arranged properly.

#### § 80. The Conference Adopts a Name.

This Conference gave the Church it represented no distinct name. We shall see hereafter that Albright was at this time not fully convinced whether this work should be continued separately and independently in the future or not. He had never intended to found a new denomination, he committed this matter to the Lord, and looked confidently to His providential guidance. But the Conference adopted a Conference-name by calling itself “*The Newly-Formed Methodist Conference.*” Albright had been a Methodist and was such still in his heart, faith and practice. If he had been allowed to fulfill his mission to the Germans within the Methodist Church, he would have remained in that Church, and the Evangelical Association would

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\*) Orwig’s *History etc.*, p. 36.

probably never have come into an existence, yet he was methodistically minded all his life-time, and so were all his co-laborers, and hence came this designation of the conference quite naturally.\*

A formal, official preacher's license was by this Conference devised and adopted. The reader will see a photographic copy of it on the following page. The original was filled up and signed by Albright himself for JOHN DREISBACH, who was then received as probationer into the itinerancy.

This document is of great historical importance for our Church, because it attests several important facts, and is also the only document extant that bears Albright's *handwriting*.†

One may see that this writing was made with a trembling hand. Overwork and great exhaustion of his strength already manifested their consequences.—The Conference also resolved that the licenses of the preachers should be renewed annually, and that the preachers in charge should also give the appointed exhorters written licenses.

#### § 81. Albright Elected Bishop and Requested to Compile a Discipline.

It was quite natural and proper that Albright should guide this Conference by his godly counsels, and that Conference willingly followed his advice, for somebody had, under God, to be the leader at this time of this body, which had as yet no special regulations for their guide. George Miller tells us that "the Conference recognized the necessity of having a Church Discipline, and upon the advice of Bro. Albright, the *Episcopal form of Church Government* was adopted, and we chose him to compile it and have it published."‡

After that they proceeded to the election of a Bishop, and the choice fell, of course, upon Albright. George Miller was also elected to the order of an elder,§ and John Dreisbach and Jacob Frey were received as preachers on probation.

What this Conference understood by the office of bishop, is very evident from the fact that in doctrine and practice, all of these ministers and men were Methodist. Albright himself had been a zealous Methodist, and was so still in spirit, and beside him labored the highly esteemed Bishop Asbury in the Methodist Church. He had studied and adopted the

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\*) Rev. John Kleinfelter, who entered the itinerant ministry some years later, confirms in a posthumous paper the fact that this Conference called itself, "*The Newly-Formed Methodist Conference*."

†) His journal was lost after his decease. If we still had that treasure it would be of inestimable value, and fill out many a gap in the early history of the Evangelical Association.


‡) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, p. 238.

§) The original Conference Record says, "4. Jacob Albright was elected Bishop by a majority of votes, and George Miller as elder." This means an elder as distinguished from a deacon in the ministry, and not a presiding elder.

Auf Bevollmächtigung der Neuformirten Methodisten Konferenz,  
 die ein gutes Zeugniß gegeben, dem *so genannten Grob Laß*  
 und willens ist ihn aufzunehmen als *Ärztlichen* --- in unsere  
 Gemeinschaft; so gebe ich, der Unterschriebene, ihm die Erlaubniß  
 das Amt nach unserer Ordnung zu bedienen, und auch dazu vorord-  
 net ist zum *sonstigen auf ein Jahr* *besetzt*, so er sich gebührend nach  
 Gottes Wort verhalten thut.

Dem 14ten November --- 1807

*Jacob Aulworth*

 The Conference Record does not show the day of the month on which it assembled, but this Preacher's License clearly indicates that the 14th day of November, 1807, was one of the Conference days.

Methodist Discipline, and was an advocate of their form of government, which he then recommended to this Conference, and which was adopted. The Conference called itself officially, as we have seen, "The Newly-Formed Methodist Conference." Who then can doubt the fact that the Conference elected Mr. Albright Bishop in the Methodistic sense? This was not regarded as a mere honorary title, it was a real, important, working and administrative office. He was, of course, elected without limit as to the tenure of the office, and according to the act of Conference and the official record thereof he was without further note or comment, or any modification the *first Bishop* of the Evangelical Association.

Through this Conference the work of the Association received a powerful impetus, and the courage of the preachers and members was greatly augmented. They realized that the work was being better organized and also strengthened outwardly.

The number of church-members was at this time 220, that of itinerant preachers 5, and local preachers 3. There were, besides these members, many adherents, scattered over a wide territory, who had not yet joined the organization.

#### § 82. Albright's Health Declines.

The general health of this man of God was by this time very much impaired and declining rapidly. Severe labors and extreme hardships had their effect upon him and speedily superinduced consumption. Yet he continued to travel almost constantly, visiting congregations, superintending the work, and preaching often. During the following Winter (1808), he accompanied the youthful Bro. Dreisbach on his tours over the "old circuit," because the latter was as yet inexperienced in the work. He seemed to cherish a special attachment to this excellent young man, and endeavored by good instructions to prepare him for the future. Dreisbach refers thereto as follows: "His excellent instructions and his pious example were very useful to me, as well as his earnest prayers, his child-like trust in God, and his humble submission to His holy will. These things made deep impressions upon my mind, and were a great help to me in my calling and work as a Christian minister. Oh, what a blessing it is to a young preacher to have such a leader and counsellor."\*

The "old circuit" was now served by George Miller and John Dreisbach and was extended over a vast territory—through the present counties of Dauphin, Lebanon, Lancaster, Berks, Bucks, Montgomery, Northampton, Lehigh and Schuylkill,—including almost the entire territory of the present East Pennsylvania Conference. It had 30 appointments, of which not a few were 20–30 or more miles apart. This was an immense field of labor, and because of the poor roads, which were frequently almost impassable, difficult to travel even on horseback.

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\* ) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, p. 108.

At Millersville, on the Conestoga river, in Lancaster county, a number of souls were converted, and the class was increased by the addition of 20 new members, among whom was JOHN ERB, who soon after entered the itinerancy. On Northumberland circuit the work also progressed.

§ 83. Albright's last "Big Meeting," and Stationing of the Preachers.

Upon Easter, 1808, a "big meeting" was held in the house of JOHN BROBST, in Albany township, Berks county, Pa., where Albright stationed the preachers for the last time. He appointed John Walter and Jacob Frey on Lancaster and Schuylkill circuit, and George Miller and John Dreisbach on the Northumberland circuit.\* A week later, at a "big meeting" held in the house of Peter Radenbach, near Linglestown, Dauphin county, Pa., Albright met his brethren in the ministry for the last time on earth.

Concerning this meeting Rev. John Kleinfelter states in a memorandum the following: "Here he was most of the time confined to his bed on account of great weakness. On Sunday he desired to be present in the meeting which was held in the barn, two of the preachers led him thither and seated him upon the preacher's stand, but on account of great faintness he could not remain, and they were obliged to take him back into the house. From there he intended to go to Mühlbach to George Becker's, but being unable to travel alone, he was accompanied by Jacob Gleim and Abraham Walter to that place."

When he left Radenbach's he gave the parting hand, for the last time, to George Miller and John Dreisbach, saying to the latter:

*"Kämpfe bis auf's Blut und Leben,  
Dring' hinein in Gottes Reich."*

From that place these brethren traveled to their new fields of labor, and the first they afterward heard of Albright was the report of his *death*! At the big meetings aforementioned, a number of sinners were converted, and God's children greatly strengthened.†

§ 84. Albright's Course Nearly Finished—His Retrospect.

Albright's disease was caused by exhaustion, in consequence of too great exertions and hardships, which then turned into quick consumption.

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\*) John Dreisbach wrote the following in his journal: "At the Easter meeting Bishop Jacob Albright appointed George Miller and John Dreisbach on the Northumberland circuit and John Walter and Jacob Frey on Lancaster and Schuylkill circuit." This is a direct testimony that the preachers recognized Bishop Albright really as *Bishop*. The unhistorical attempts made in modern times to cast doubt upon Albright's episcopacy are *sheer inventions*.

†) Mr. Dreisbach adds this remark: "When at that time a 'big meeting' was held, then it was understood that the travelling preachers would attend and assist each other, and not only the preachers, but many of the Christian friends would come 80 to 100 miles to such meetings." And not a few would *walk* all that distance.

He had now arrived at the close of his itinerant career which he had followed for about twelve years under great difficulties, persecutions and conflicts, and which resulted in the conversion of many souls and the glory of God. He was now rapidly sinking, and turned his face homeward to die.—What thoughts now moved his soul may be seen from the following touching words which a friend noted down: “And now I thank God, the Most High, and to Him be eternal praise for His grace, which He has given unto me, that He has kept me steadfast in the faith, and pure in life, through the trials, persecutions and sufferings, which have befallen me in this life, permitting me to see that His grace was not bestowed upon me in vain. The seals of my ministry are the converted brethren and sisters, whom I have begotten through the Gospel, and whom I am certain to meet again in heaven, if they remain steadfast in faith, love and hope. And I trust firmly in God, that unto me will be given the inheritance of the saints in light—an *incorruptible crown*.” \*

Who can imagine the wonderful retrospect his weary and yet exulting soul had in the review of the wonderful ways God had led him since 1792, and especially since 1796, when he first entered into the itinerant work, and was impelled to go upon the divine call, “a way he knew not.” And now, behold, the blessed, glorious results of his obedience to God.—It was spiritually logical that during his short sickness, while his soul was spreading its wings for glory, it was also often—

“Lost in wonder, love and praise.”

#### § 85. His Last Journey Homeward, to Die.—His Blessed Departure.

When he left Linglestown he intended to reach home and there close his career; but arriving at Mühlbach he felt that he must desist, and as he was brought into the house of George Becker, he said: “Have you my bed ready? I have come to die.” And there he lay down to arise no more.

During his sickness he had close communion with God. And yet here, on the verge of heaven, the enemy of souls made a last fierce attack upon him in his great weakness, but he looked to God in earnest, childlike supplication. A number of visiting brethren and sisters joined their prayers with his, and soon he obtained a glorious—yea *eternal victory*. The friends often held prayer-meetings in his death chamber; upon these occasions he was filled with the power of endless life, and praised God with his now feeble voice.

Shortly before his death an experience meeting was held, and when the leader put the question to him, asking how he felt, he answered, “Happy and heavenly,” and with a smile added, “Soon I shall reach Heaven,” and praised God. He thanked the Lord that he was privileged

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\*) Albright and his Co-laborers, p. 115.

to die in the company of God's people, instead of worldly men who talk only of carnal things, and was so overwhelmed with joy in God that he requested those around him to join him in glorifying God. When the end came, he desired again that the friends should meet at his bedside and pray.

The last scene has been described by Rev. George Miller, as follows : "He retained the perfect use of his mental powers to the last. A tranquility of mind which only the consciousness of a well-spent life of good works and noble deeds, and the assurance of eternal life and future blessedness can give, could be seen upon his countenance. He bade an affecting and affectionate farewell to those who were present, requesting them to unite with him in praising God, who would soon take his soul unto Himself. He gratefully praised his Maker for His providential care over him, and for the guidance of his hand, through which he was led to experience peace, and joy, and a living hope, through faith in God. No one present remained unaffected. Every one felt a strong desire to die as this righteous man died."

One of those who were present says : "Thus our pious Albright calmly and peacefully fell asleep in Jesus. During the time he bade adieu to the friends with great joy, the house seemed to be filled with the power of God. The children of God felt that Heaven was near, and praised God for the manifestation of his power." Thus this faithful servant of God entered into the joy of his Lord, on May 18th, 1808, in his 50th year.

Surely, as the Christian poet says,

"The chamber, where the good man meets his fate,  
Is privileged above the common walks of life—  
Quite on the verge of Heaven !"

#### § 86. The Solemn Burial.

The funeral took place on the 20th day of May. An immense concourse of people attended the services, among whom were many who had been led from darkness into light by his labors. John Walter, his first co-laborer, preached a powerful and touching funeral sermon on Daniel 12, 3. : "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament ; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." An eye-witness reports as follows :

"A number of Albright's spiritual children accompanied his remains to their resting place. Many were so richly blessed that they praised God with shouting and joy for His unspeakable grace. Among the people in general, the happy death of this man of God, and the richly-blessed funeral sermon, produced a deep conviction and awakening. Several of the inhabitants made applications to the preachers before they left the place, for preaching in their houses. In this was our sainted brother even in death

an instrument in the hands of God to spread the Gospel and true Christianity.”\*

His remains were buried in a family cemetery near Kleinfeltersville, where in years after the Albright Church was built as a memorial.—Upon a plain tombstone one may read the following inscription :

“In memory of the Evangelical preacher Jacob Albright, born May 1st, 1759, and died May 18th, 1808, aged 49 years and 17 days. His remains rest under this stone. ‘Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints,’ (Ps. 116, 15.)”

### § 87. The After-Effects.

The effects of Albright’s death upon the feelings of preachers and members were very painful. To the ministers, who clung to Albright with the most intense love, as true children to a good father, his sudden departure was a most painful shock. They felt like Elisha when he called after Elijah, “My father ! My father ! The chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.” They often gave vent to their feelings in the most sorrowful weeping, and their grief would have become almost intolerable, if their love to him had not wished him the enjoyment of sweet rest, after his days of hardship, and if God’s promises had not been their strength and comfort. The membership, which largely consisted of his spiritual children, also deeply mourned on account of the loss of their spiritual father.

The world—inside and outside of the Churches—was greatly elated, and shouted lustily : “Now they are fallen ! Their Albright is dead, now it is all over with them !” “But,” said George Miller, “in this they greatly erred ; though Albright had died, God still lived, who owned this work as His, and hence also knew how to prosper and spread it. Thanks be unto the high and glorious God, who does not despise the lowly and the humble, but rather chooses them for His possession.†

The death of Albright had also the tendency to induce preachers and people to consecrate themselves still more fully to God and His work, and the work grew mightily until this day.

### § 88. Characteristics of Albright.

It will be quite proper in this place to insert a condensed description of Mr. Albright’s person and character.

1. As regards his person—he had a well-formed symmetrical body, of

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\*) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, pp. 116–120.

†) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, p. 119.

a little more than medium size, which made a favorable impression upon persons around him.\*

2. His personal habits were of an excellent order. He kept himself and his dress very clean and neat, thereby furnishing an example that cleanliness and godliness are closely related, and that a Christian's body should be kept pure as a temple of the Holy Ghost. He was punctual in all things. When writing he was careful not to soil anything with ink; when in the morning he left his bedroom everything was left in good order. In his time nearly every one made some use of whiskey, because the opinion prevailed that it was conducive to good health, but he abstained altogether from the use of all strong drink. He was industrious, economical, and radically honest. By his business he acquired a competency of several thousand dollars before he went forth preaching. To preachers he recommended economy, etc.

3. His natural and acquired talents were of no mean order. He possessed a clear, sound judgment, coupled with a goodly portion of "mother wit." In temporal matters he comprehended things quickly, and usually also correctly. After his understanding had been enlightened by the Spirit of God, his spiritual views were correspondingly clear and reliable. He had a meditative mind, which was, however, supported by a well-balanced, active temperament which secured him against melancholy. His gift of speech was more than ordinary; although he himself did not regard it highly, yet many of those who heard him testified that more than one talent was given him in this respect. In preaching, the Word was often given him with "utterance, that he could open his mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel,"† so that even his adversaries were overwhelmed with astonishment and wonder.

In his time the schools in Pennsylvania were in a poor condition. The State did not care for the education of the young. Only private schools were held during a few months in the year. The country was in great part yet a wilderness, where Indians and wild animals roved about. In such a private school he learned to read and write, and also the rudiments of arithmetic.

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\* ) John Dreisbach furnished the following interesting, personal description: "He had a high forehead, blue, clear, and somewhat deeply set and penetrating eyes, a well-formed, slightly Roman nose; mouth and chin in good proportion; his face was somewhat narrow and oblong, hair black, complexion fair, and body symmetrically formed. In him the sanguine and choleric temperaments blended, his movements were quick, but always *graceful*. When, in later years, he became a minister of the Gospel, his personal appearance made such a favorable impression that the remark was sometimes made: "Why he looks like an angel."—This expression was the more emphatic because the outcry raised against him by persecutors had impressed many that this man must be a sort of *monster*."

† ) Ephesians 6, 19.

But a spirit like his will press forward ; although he spent his younger years among strange people and heard nothing but the Pennsylvania-German dialect, he acquired the correct pronunciation of the German language, so that he could make use of it in preaching. With an English dictionary he also mastered the English language so far that he could, when circumstances required it, deliver an English address. He also had a large commentary of the Holy Scriptures, but the Bible itself, and the hymn-book and catechism, were his greatest treasures. Other books were exceedingly scarce at that time.

4. He was methodical, and highly esteemed good order in a Church, hence he was so much delighted, after his conversion, with the discipline of the Methodist Church. And for this reason he could not abide with those good people who in his time called themselves 'Independents,' 'Impartials,' 'Liberty-People,' etc., rejecting Church-order and discipline.

5. He was modest and unassuming, hence the last man who would put himself forward to found a new denomination, in order to achieve notoriety. Only necessity and duty impelled him to form a few classes in 1800 ; the further organization was undertaken only because the work and circumstances made it necessary—and during his life-time it received not even a name. Only a few months before his departure he said to John Dreisbach, in a familiar, open-hearted manner, when the latter deplored the probability that Albright could not, on account of failing health, compile a Discipline and Articles of Faith : *"If it is the will of God that you should be and remain a Church, then He will also provide for you in this respect ; men will appear among you who will be able to accomplish that which I shall not be able to do. It is the work of God, and it is in His hands, He will also provide for it."* From the time of his call to preach the Gospel, which was, as it were, pressed upon him, until his death, he regarded this work as *a work of God*.

6. In juxtaposition to this it is to be said that he was also a very firm and decided man after he had clearly ascertained that which is true and right. When he clearly understood the will of God, he submitted to it unhesitatingly and obeyed the truth. No difficulties, nor hardships, nor self-denial, nor persecutions, nor inner trials, nor anything else, could then move him from the right path. In divine things he did not consult flesh and blood, nor unconverted men. He yielded his ear to the voice of God, after he had learned the divine will through the Word and Spirit of God, and the use of sanctified reason.

7. Albright sought only the glory of God and the salvation of men. As one proof among many we quote his affectionate advice to his colleagues and co-laborers when they had met for the last time on earth : *"In all that ye do, or think of doing, let your object be to enhance God's glory, and advance the work of His grace in your hearts, as well as among your brethren and sisters ; and be diligent co-workers with God, in the way which*

*He has pointed out to you, to which He will grant you His blessing."* This short, concise and excellent parting advice is certainly worthy of being appreciated by the whole Church, and highly and sacredly regarded by the ministry, yea, to be honored as a motto, and, above all, to be carried out practically.

8. In his intercourse with men he conducted himself in a manly, yet friendly and condescending manner. He loved children greatly. He never spoke harshly or insultingly, even against his most bitter enemies and adversaries. He showed himself philanthropic and patient, especially when he believed that they were acting from ignorance, etc. To young preachers he was a tender father, and if one was severely tried, he would not hesitate to travel a great distance, in order to assist and encourage him until the tempter was put to flight.\* But to hypocrites and pharisees he was a pungent salt, and would, if necessary, apply to them his keen "mother-wit" in a very effective way.

Summarizing the whole of his character we would say in the words of John Dreisbach: "*Jacob Albright was a man of whom the Evangelical Association has no reason to be ashamed in any respect;*" and of whom the Divine Master by His Spirit and providence has clearly said: "*He is a chosen vessel unto Me.*" (Acts 9.)

We add the testimonies of two of Albright's fellow-laborers. George Miller says: "This godly man had preached the Gospel for nearly twelve years. The immediate fruit of his labors was the conversion of at least three hundred souls, who were diligently striving to serve God and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. They strove to build each other up in the unity of faith, in accordance with the command of Christ and His apostles and the directions of their faithful teacher. \* \* \* His public prayers and sermons were powerful, penetrating and convincing, although delivered in a simple manner, not with the enticing words of human wisdom, but he spake as one moved by the Holy Ghost, whose power manifested itself in all his addresses. Love for his fellowmen seemed to pervade him; he prayed for his enemies and persecutors, and neglected no opportunity to promote their welfare and lead them into the path of truth. Even his gestures, looks and movements often revealed the presence of God's Spirit within him, so that his hearers were deeply affected without the utterance of many words on his part. At times he entirely forgot his body and himself, and then such a degree of inspiration was upon him that he stepped from the desk or table into the middle of the room, without perceiving it himself. When these strong emotions filled his soul, wonderful joy was seen in his countenance, praises to God flowed from his lips, and his whole being was in motion. Whatever comes

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\* ) See a very striking and touching example of this in *Albright and his Co-laborers*, pp. 215-218.

from the heart reaches the heart, and hence his hearers were so touched, that the seed of the Word did not fall among thorns, but bore precious fruit. He discharged his ministerial duties with earnestness and punctuality; he never neglected an appointed meeting if the condition of his health in any wise permitted him to be there, nor did he merely discharge his ministerial duties as such in a perfunctory manner, but fulfilled them with delight and joy. He was diligent in cultivating and promoting spiritual union with and among his brethren, watching with paternal solicitude over their conduct, himself being a good example, endeavoring to the best of his ability to promote *true holiness of heart* among them.

"The persecutions and sufferings, which he had to endure for Christ's sake, he bore with great patience, meeting them with gentleness and kindness. He considered the grace of God, which he had received, so great a blessing, that all the sufferings of this life bore no comparison to the joy it Christ, in calling sinners to repentance, and in urging believers to follow after holiness, and thus he became a chosen vessel of God for the promotion of the revival of true godliness, for the grace of God rested visibly upon him and his work. None of his enemies, though trying their utmost, could do him the least harm, for in all he did, he sought the glory of God. This was the chief principle of his life, which he always endeavored to inculcate. He lived nearly eighteen years in a state of grace, and realized many experiences of the gracious providence and protection of God in his earthly career."

John Dreisbach furnished the following statement: "As a preacher, Albright was very cheerful and amiable in his intercourse with the people and spoke very pointedly of conversion and growth in grace, yet also discreetly and thoughtfully. He was an early riser, searched the Scriptures diligently; at the places where he stopped he at times retired to a grove with his Bible for meditation and prayer for hours. When stopping with a family he would, when practicable, go into a room alone and spend a long time in prayer before preaching. When the people had assembled, he came forth from his room, so filled with the Spirit of God that his countenance seemed to shine with the lustre of heavenly wisdom. This then made such an impression upon the people, that at times deep emotions were awakened by the heavenly expressions of his countenance, before he arose to preach.

"Both in his preaching and intercourse with the people he made a very judicious use of circumstances, incidents and illustrations. For instance — passing by a garden in which some persons were at work, he stopped a minute for conversation and admonished them in this wise: 'My good people, do you also consider that Jesus agonized and struggled in the garden of Gethsemane until his sweat became drops of blood, for the purpose of making your hearts gardens of God?' When he found no

access by word of mouth he left a few written lines. At one time he visited his brother Daniel Albright, who, however, opposed him stoutly, whereupon he wrote upon the fly leaf of the family Bible :

*"Viel besser nie geboren,  
Als ewiglich verloren."*

"Much better never born,  
Than to be forever lost."

This brother was afterward converted and died happy in the Lord.\*

#### § 89. An Eventful Year.

It will be seen that the year 1808 was a very eventful year for the little Church. The departure of Albright was a loss to them that could not be measured nor compensated. Their spiritual father was gone and they keenly felt their state of orphanage, but amidst their tears they could say with the sainted John Wesley, "The best of all is, God is with us." And the Lord did provide. George Miller already developed administrative talents; as John Walter was in this respect not greatly gifted, and the highly talented John Dreisbach was as yet a young man of about 19 years of age, it was a matter of course that the direction of the work now devolved upon George Miller.

Meanwhile the Lord led two excellent young men—JOHN ERB and MATTHEW BETZ—into this vineyard, who became very useful ministers of the Gospel. John Erb was associated with Walter on the "old circuit," because J. Frey was employed elsewhere, and soon after became engaged in matrimonial affairs and retired from the ministry.

#### § 90. Miller Compiles the Discipline.

Jacob Albright's decease, of course, delayed the compilation of the Discipline which had been entrusted to him by the Conference, and was now, after their leader was gone, specially felt to be a pressing want. It was urged upon Mr. Miller to undertake this task, but as he had not been appointed thereto and had but little practice in writing, he felt very diffident about it. Moreover, he was the preacher in charge on the large Northumberland circuit, with Dreisbach as junior preacher.† But as Walter, who was now the oldest preacher, insisted upon it, Miller began the compilation in the month of December, 1808.

After a very remarkable dream which he had, he became seriously sick, on the 26th of December, and was compelled to leave the circuit, and could not labor much as a traveling preacher from that time forth. But

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\*) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, pp. 121, 125.

†) Dreisbach says in his journal: "George Miller and I labored on our circuit under the blessings of God. Although our *Bishop*, whom we elected a half year ago, has departed, we had an infinitely greater Bishop—the Shepherd and bishop of our souls." (1 Pet. 2, 25.)

this afforded him the needed time to compile the Discipline. This work was, however, a great burden on his heart, and he tells us that he often was on his knees in earnest prayer to God for light and divine guidance until after midnight! And the Lord graciously heard him, and blessed him also in this good work.

### § 91. Dreisbach's Severe Labors.

After Miller had left the large Northumberland circuit, as afore mentioned, Dreisbach remained alone on this large and important work, which very much depressed him, on account of his youth and inexperience. But he cried to God for help, his prayer was answered and his labor so richly blessed that he received a large number of newly-converted souls into the Church before the close of the conference year.\* Bro. Matthew Betz came to his help before the close of the year, and labored with blessed success, which caused much joy. And shortly before conference HENRY NIEBEL † placed himself in the itinerant ranks on this circuit.

### § 92. A Fierce Storm of Persecution.

About this time there arose a vehement persecution against the Evangelical Association, which was then designated as the "Albright people," and also the "German Methodists." The deplorable condition of the

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\*) Of this he says in his journal: "Yet I believed that God could show His power in me—a weak youth—to His glory. With prayers and tears I drew nigh to Him for the needed sufficiency, and blessed be the God of all grace, that He did bless my weak service with a considerable number of converted souls, nearly all of whom I received into the Church."

†) Rev. HENRY NIEBEL's conversion was a remarkable one, of which a few circumstances are worthy of record:

ABRAHAM EYER, a Mennonite, removed quite early from Lancaster county to Dry Valley, Northumberland county, Pa., (which part of the country was then indefinitely called "Shamokin"), and led, in a manner, a quiet Christian life. He was one of the first men in his section that entertained Mr. Albright when he first visited those parts, and became one of his zealous defenders. It was Father Eyer's custom on Sunday afternoons, to gather his family around the large family table, and read and expound to them a portion of Holy Scripture. During the time of the great awakening under Walter and Miller, (1805-6), a young school teacher, who wanted to prepare himself for the ministry in the Reformed Church, boarded with EYERS. This was HENRY NIEBEL. During one of these Bible readings Niebel began to criticise Father Eyer's remarks, saying such and such things were unnecessary, etc. Upon this Father Eyer arose from his seat, stood before the young school teacher and exhorted him with great earnestness, telling him that he was a stranger to godliness, etc. This address made a deep impression upon the young man, who from that time forth could find no rest until he sought and found the Lord, whereupon he soon commenced to preach the Gospel, and later on became one of the leaders in the Association. He was a man of much prayer, and one of his later co-laborers. Rev. Chas. Hammer, asserted that he took the marks of much *kneeling in prayer* with him into his grave.

Churches and the people, hereinbefore described, still continued. Not a few of the clergymen were drunkards and immoral characters. Frequently the most wicked and immoral men were put into the Church offices because they winked at the great godlessness among the clergy and laity, and would themselves not to be in danger of being seduced and of falling away from the faith, as the current saying had it.

But the itinerant preachers "cried aloud and spared not." They attacked sin, whether it was found in the pulpit or in the pew, still more sharply and fearlessly. Many persons were converted, and this persecution almost compelled them to join the "praying people," whereby those persecuting parsons lost *many a dollar*.

This made them still more angry, and they thundered anathemas from the pulpits against these "Albrights" and "Methodists," and by slanderous reports they excited the ignorant populace to the most bitter villifications and persecutions.

"Besides villifications, the enemies of live, active Christianity employed also the press, to pour out the filth and iniquity of their wicked hearts against these people. One of the most noted among them wrote a lampoon of the most shameful, scurrilous kind, and his colleagues assisted him in spreading it among the people. As many looked upon this libel as containing the truth, they believed themselves authorized to persecute these praying people as much as possible, and some declared their readiness to take up arms against them and exterminate them if it were not against the laws of the country. 'If it were lawful,' said one of them, 'I would just as soon shoot a *Straweler preacher* as a mad dog.' Another, who on account of advanced age was exempt from military service, said, if the militia were called out for the purpose of exterminating these people, he would be one of the first to turn his musket upon them. These facts cannot be denied. Such a murderous spirit was engendered and fostered among their people by the clergy of those days.

Moreover, they did not fail, at the same time, to warn their people most energetically against apostatizing from the faith, against hearing these 'deceivers and false prophets,' in other words, against forsaking their Church and joining these 'Methodists.'"

There were, of course, some noble exceptions among clergy and laity, but they were *exceptions only*. We would prefer to pass by these grievous facts in silence, but we must be faithful to history.

### § 93. Terrible Attack upon John Dreisbach.

As an instance, which strikingly shows the nature of the persecution that raged at that time, we insert the following :

"It was in the month of August, 1808, when John Dreisbach returned

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\*) Orwig's *History of the Evangelical Association*, pp. 45-47.

from a 'big meeting' held near Mühlbach, accompanied by a young brother, Andrew Wolf, to fill an appointment that evening in Jonestown, Lebanon county, Pa.; but as he had been disturbed while preaching there before, on his way to said meeting, he intended to preach to the friends, without giving public notice of it. From fear, not of the Jews, but of heathenish Christians, the doors had been locked and the window shutters fastened inside, before the services commenced. After singing and prayer the sermon began, but as, probably, the exercises had been heard by some of the adversaries, a mob gathered in a short time, and forcing the doors and shutters open, they rushed into the house with fearful noise, and still more fearful imprecations, and thus put a stop to the exercises. The preacher then took a light and went among the crowd to restore order, but was seized by several ruffians and dragged toward the door, treating him very roughly, and extinguishing all the lights in the house. Those who were dragging him, hallooed to their companions, who were outside, 'Boys, open the door, we have got him now.' They replied, "Give it to him, kill the priest."

The preacher was justly apprehensive of still worse treatment, if they should succeed in getting him out of the house, but how to get out of their hands he knew not. Instantly it flashed upon his mind, as if God had revealed it to him, that if he should unexpectedly raise himself up with all his might, and then suddenly fall down full length, he might get out of their hands. He did so, and thus got rid of them, although he was still among the crowd in the dark. Now, as the ruffians were groping for him, they got hold of each other, letting torrents of blows descend on one another, each fancying that he was beating the '*priest*.' But while they were thus regaling each other to their hearts' content with blows and pushes, he managed to get out of the crowd, and the mob reached out doors. Alarmed for the minister, some of the friends hastened out also, but were seized and very much abused by the mob. The landlord, Peter Walter, was so much hurt that blood gushed from his mouth and nose. A sister was knocked down, and carried into the house for dead. Several other friends were also very roughly dealt with.

This is one of the many examples of persecution and ill-treatment, which the first ministers and members of the Evangelical Association often experienced. Similar occurrences took place even 20—25 years later in Berks and Schuylkill Counties, Pa.

On the following day the ringleaders of the Jonestown mob, seven in number, were legally charged by the brethren, and then delivered over to the county Court. But the enemies also brought charges against Mr. Dreisbach and some other brethren, vainly hoping to gain some advantage thereby.

When the case was tried at Harrisburgh, it seemed at first, as though they would really be benefited by it. But after all, they did not gain their

end, the jury found them guilty and acquitted the brethren. After the suit the brethren remitted their persecutors' costs, thus showing them that they had not brought the suit against them for malice or revenge, but merely to teach them that the Evangelical Association enjoys the protection of the law, not less than other denominations in the United States, and that they were determined to hold their meetings without being disturbed. The favorable issue of this prosecution had a very salutary influence upon the public at large, benefiting other denominations as well as the Evangelical Association. Prior to this prosecution, tumults and disturbances of religious meetings were quite frequent, but after this they were, for years, much less frequent and outrageous.\*

One of the jurors who tried the case, PHILIP BREIDENSTEIN, who lived near Lebanon, Pa., was soon afterward converted and joined the Church, and became a useful local preacher. Albright had already preached in his house, but the conduct of these despised people during the trial, made a deep impression upon him, so that he became satisfied they were Christians and children of God, which, it seems, led him to give his heart to God and his hand to this people. And thus it was, that "light was caused to shine out of darkness," and the "wrath of man was made to praise God."

#### § 94. Conference Session Omitted.

There was no Conference held this year (1808). Probably because Bishop Albright was gone to his everlasting rest; George Miller became seriously sick, and John Walter was not adapted to lead in such matters, and besides, the Conference of 1807 had adopted the necessary measures for the present time. The brethren labored right on in brotherly unity, assisting each other on their fields of labor, as circumstances and wants demanded it. Although it was a year of severe trials, it was also a year of great blessings and victories. The borders were extended and the older congregations advanced in divine life, and grew in knowledge and grace.

#### § 95. The Second Conference Session.

In the month of April, 1809, the second Conference of the Evangelical Association was held in the house of George Miller, in Albany Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania, and was attended by the following itinerant ministers: George Miller, John Walter, John Dreisbach, John Erb, Matthew Betz and Henry Niebel. The latter two were received into the itinerancy on probation at this session. George Miller was elected chairman, and John Dreisbach secretary. But as Conference had no business rules whatever, and Albright, who had been their fatherly guide, was absent in glory, and as none of them had any experience in a parliamentary respect, they

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\* ) Orwig's *History*, etc., pp. 49, 50.

experienced considerable entanglement in their proceedings. However, they succeeded in completing the necessary transactions, and agreeing upon some important measures. Jacob Frey was deposed from the ministry and expelled from the Church for transgressions. John Walter and John Dreisbach had the degree of Elder given to them. John Walter and John Erb were appointed to the Lancaster and Schuylkill circuit, and John Dreisbach, Matthew Betz and Henry Niebel to the Northumberland circuit. George Miller was requested to travel and preach as much as his health might permit, and also to write something for the edification of the Church.

#### § 96. Publication of the Discipline Ordered.

George Miller had completed the Discipline and now laid it before the Conference in manuscript. It was accepted and Miller instructed to publish it at his own expense, for Conference had no funds and could not control any. Miller carried out the instructions and the little book sold so rapidly that the cost was soon covered. Concerning this the compiler says, "The results of this Discipline in the Church were, that all received new courage, steadfastly to retain their union with God and with one another, and a number were persuaded to unite with us, in order to work out their salvation according to these rules. Thanks be unto God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who permitted me, as an unworthy instrument, also to do something in my bodily weakness to the honor of His name."

Now in consideration that this Church Discipline was a production of much prayer and meditation, that George Miller was taken out of the itinerant service by Providence, in order to compile it, and that the little book proved to be a great blessing to the Church—the hand of God is very clearly seen in this important matter.

It should be added here that Rev. Henry Boehm, who was a Methodist minister, procured a translation of the Methodist Discipline into the German language, made by Dr. Ignatius Roemer,\* which was published in the year 1808, from which George Miller transferred the article on Christian Perfection, and most of the Articles of Faith and a few other sections, literally, into the Discipline of the Evangelical Association.†

This, our first Church Discipline, was a small book of 75 pages, and contained besides the the "Rules" also doctrinal essays taken from the writings of Wesley and Fletcher on "Christian Perfection," "Predestination," "Final Perseverance of the Saints, and a dissertation against "Antinomianism."

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\* See *Bishop Asbury's Journal*, vol III, p. 293.

†) This translation was, however, defective, and for that reason its language was revised by a committee appointed by General Conference of 1879.

Hence it was also an excellent *doctrinal guide* for both preachers and members.—The title page portrayed quite an effort, in accordance with the custom of those times to exhibit *in extenso* what the contents were, as follows :

*“Doctrines of Faith, and General Rules of Christian Church Discipline and Order of the so-called Albright People, intending to show the purpose of their union with God, and among themselves, in order to work out their soul’s salvation, through the Grace of God, and in the unity of faith and chaste obedience to such rules, to live and walk according to the Word of God. Upon the advice of the Elders of this Evangelical Community, and the instruction of the Conference. Published by George Miller, Reading. Printed for the Author, by John Ritter & Co., 1809.”*

John Dreisbach had also translated a small catechism from the English into the German language, and Conference directed him to have it printed for the use of the Church, which was also done.

The first preachers of the Evangelical Association clearly recognized the great importance of instructing children and young people in the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures through a catechism and otherwise. They even regarded this as a main feature of their calling ; all assertions to the contrary are groundless. John Erb manifested special zeal in this respect, and all the itinerant preachers applied themselves earnestly to this matter.

#### § 97. The Name “The So-called Albright People” Adopted.

This Conference also resolved to adopt the name : “The So-called Albright People,” which shows clearly :

1. That these men and brethren were in no wise ashamed of the stigma “Albright People.” They knew Albright as having been a man of God, whom the Lord himself had highly honored with rich blessings, and who had in all things been a *man* and a *pattern* for them, and who could say : “Follow me, dear brethren, as I follow Christ.”

2. But that this designation was a temporary one, as the word “so-called” indicates. It was not the name that they originated. It seems they had not yet come to a clear understanding what the permanent name of this Association should be.

Jacob Phillips, a local preacher, one of the oldest members, who had also been a member of the Council in 1803, entered during the year into the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

The number of members was found to be 426, an increase of 206, during the past two years, which was nearly doubling the membership. But it should be kept in mind that many others were awakened who did not join. At that time it required moral heroism to take up the “cross” of persecution connected with membership in this despised band of “praying people.”

### § 98. Progress of the Work.—Second Ordination of Ministers.

During this year (1809–10), five new classes were formed. During the Winter season considerable revivals took place on the Schuylkill and Lancaster circuit. Among the new converts were DAVID THOMAS and JOHN SEYBERT,\* who afterward became itinerant preachers, and Lewis Henky, George Lauz, John Ripley and David Boyer, who became local preachers. On Northumberland circuit the work progressed victoriously.

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\*) JOHN SEYBERT'S conversion was a remarkable one, and as he himself became a remarkable factor in our history, we insert a description of it here.

MATTHEW BETZ was, by the grace of God, the instrument in the awakening and conversion of John Seybert, and became thereby his spiritual father. This took place in 1810, in Seybert's 19th year. The general "talk" that the Evangelical preachers were *deceivers* and *false prophets* who should appear in the "last times," had also influenced Seybert so far that he began to think it might possibly be so. But he and one of his comrades concluded they would attend one of the meetings, in order to hear and judge for themselves and get to the bottom of this matter. The preaching was to be in a private house, and when they came there Seybert's companion refused to go into the house, but Seybert went in, and after awhile his companion followed him. The details of what then took place are reported as follows:

Seybert seated himself on the foremost bench, the farther end of which reached the table, behind which the preacher was already seated. It was about the time the preachers delivered their last sermons before going to Conference. As Seybert thus sat there before the table, his keen eyes inspected his surroundings, but especially the preacher, the books, and the book in his hand, and so far nothing seemed very remarkable, except that he thought the preacher had unusually long fingers. He thought then that this must be the kind of fingers these "false prophets" had.

Now the time had arrived to begin the worship. The preacher arose and read a hymn in a solemn manner, and after having sung a few stanzas, the preacher and people fell on their knees to pray, and as Seybert had come so near the table and among the praying people, he also knelt down. While Bro. Betz prayed the power of God was revealed, and seized young Seybert so powerfully that his heart was shaken, and he often said that during this prayer "chill upon chill went up his back," and he felt something in his heart he had never before experienced. Thus Bro. Betz already wounded him considerably with the weapon of prayer, and the thought about the *long fingers* and the *deceiver* had fled, and tremblingly he resolved he would stay and hear further. Of the sermon and its effects he says himself: "After prayer the preacher arose, read a text and began to preach. Before he was half through I was freed from the hallucination that he was a false prophet, yea, I was clearly convinced that he must be a man of God, for he preached with power from the eternal world. And when the sermon had ended, I was convinced that I was no Christian, but a sinner, who deserved damnation, and who had merited the wrath of the God of Heaven. Then and there I received a wound through the sword of the Spirit, and a stroke from the hammer of the Word, from which I never recovered to this day (after his fiftieth year), and which will continue with me to all eternity. *Blessed be God forever and ever!*" (See *Life of Bishop Seybert*, pp. 25, 26.)

He now earnestly sought salvation and continued to wrestle day and night in prayer and entreaty, with strong cries and tears and unabated earnestness, until he was—to use his own favorite phrase—"converted deep into Eternal Life."

During this year, at a "big meeting," held in the house of HENRY EBY, near Lebanon, Pa., the brethren George Miller, John Walter, and John Dreisbach were ordained Elders, as had been ordered by Conference.

Of this ordination John Dreisbach says: "This was the *second formal* ordination in the Evangelical Association. John Erb, Matthew Betz and Henry Niebel were also present. It was in truth a solemn, and also a quickening time for all of us. I felt myself more than ever devoted to God and His holy cause, and it was my greatest desire to be useful in His vineyard. From this time onward, I felt myself more established in the work, and realized a stronger confidence in God."\* This also was a sign of divine approbation. The work in general gained a stronger degree of solidity, was still better organized, and preachers and members were united like "one man in the battle," as the current saying then was.

### § 99. Third Conference Session.—Conquests and a New Circuit.

The time of the third session of Conference arrived, which was held on April 18-20, 1810, at Mühlbach, Pa., in the house of George Becker. George Miller was again appointed chairman, and John Dreisbach secretary. In what way these appointments were made, the records do not show. Each session opened with prayer. Michael Becker and David Jerlitz were received as preachers on probation, John Erb and Matthew Betz were ordained deacons. John Walter, Henry Niebel and Michael Becker were appointed to Schuylkill and Lancaster circuit, and John Dreisbach and David Jerlitz to Northumberland circuit. John Erb and Matthew Betz were instructed to form a new circuit in the counties York, Adams, Cumberland and Franklin, or, in modern phraseology, they were sent into said counties as missionaries, to found a new mission. They had to perform severe pioneer work.

At that time the Association had no missionary society, but missionary work was continually done, and when a "new appointment" was gained, it was considered an important event. The brethren Walter and Dreisbach were instructed sometimes to exchange appointments with the brethren Erb and Betz, which was carried out with good results. George Miller was again requested, as his health and strength would permit, to write, travel and

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\*) Rev. Wm. W. Orwig says in his History that this was the first formal ordination in the Evangelical Association, (p. 52), which is an error. This mistake was also copied into *Albright and his Co-laborers*, (p. 285). In his manuscript, which is still extant, Dreisbach expressly says that it was "the *second* formal ordination." And such is the fact. The *first* formal ordination was performed at the "council" in 1803, when Albright was ordained, and the above was the *second* in the history of the Church. The second ordination, like the first, was performed by the brethren themselves, in compliance with the order of Conference. There was no one present and participating, who had been ordained before. The validity of such ordination has been discussed and shown already in this work. (See pp. 66-70.)

preach during the coming conference year. John Walter received permission to publish a small hymn book, and George Miller to publish a biography of the sainted Albright, at the expense of the itinerant ministers.

### § 100. Conference Rules.

This was quite a business-like and eventful session. The Conference adopted an order of procedure and business rules which had been compiled by George Miller, and this was found to facilitate the business greatly. At the previous session they had entangled themselves considerably for want of such rules and experience. George Miller, in speaking of this, added :

"This induced me to draw up business rules for the Conference, which were also adopted, and we could now do our business in accordance with these rules, so that the majority of votes decided all questions, and hence evils could be suppressed and good purposes promoted, without hurting each other's feelings, or offending the weaker brethren. Our Conferences hereafter became seasons of great grace, in which all were edified and encouraged. The Lord be praised, who thus ordered it." \*

From the record of the first Conference, of 1807, we learn that their elections were governed by a "majority of votes," but their other proceedings were evidently done by "common consent," under the guidance of Albright. But in this third Conference, 1810, the rule was established that the majority of votes should decide *all questions*, and Miller says : "God blessed this proceeding," namely, the adoption and practice of this majority rule. Decision by majority is thus seen to be an *old Evangelical landmark*. Without such a rule, confusion and anarchy would soon prevail. These old Evangelical fathers saw the danger and built a wall of protection. Can it be necessary in our day to inculcate this lesson ?

In the official record of this Conference appear, for the first time, the signatures of the names of the participating members, which was done, according to the adopted rule, with great solemnity in the following manner, as the record states : "Conference was closed with prayer to God and united approval of the aforementioned ordinances; and as a token of willingness to follow our calling and ordinances we sign our names as before God, that we are obligated to discharge our duties as our Church Discipline gives us an introduction into the Holy Scriptures.—

"George Miller, John Dreisbach, Matthew Betz, David Jerlitz, John Walter, John Erb, Henry Niebel, Michael Becker."

This rule has been sacredly kept by all the Annual and General Conferences of our Church until this day, and is very properly regarded as one of the fundamental laws of the Church, and this act of signing at the close of Conference, as the crowning and sealing act of the Conference proceedings.

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\*) *Albright and his Co-laborers*, p. 249.

### § 101. John Walter as a Poet.

It was specially remarkable that this unlearned and in an executive respect insignificant man, John Walter, possessed, besides his uncommon gift for preaching, also a considerable poetic talent. He composed several original hymns which acquired a place and reputation in the Church, for instance: "*Kommt Brüder, kommt, wir eilen fort.*" (Come brethren, come, we hasten on.), "*Wer will mit uns nach Zion gehn?*" (Who will go with us to Zion?)

He also made translations of English hymns into the German language, which is a particularly difficult task. He was not very well versed in the English language, and hence was necessitated to inquire the meaning of many English words. His translation of the hymn, "My God, the Spring of all my joys," is a very successful one, and has been inserted into the present excellent German Evangelical hymn-book. The small hymn-book, which the Conference permitted him to print, contained 56 hymns, some of which were composed by himself. This was the first hymn-book of our Church. Until that time the preachers and members used the Lutheran and Reformed hymn-books. Walter's hymn-book appeared in 1810, having the following title: "A small collection of Spiritual Hymns, old and new, for the edification and use of all souls who love God, compiled and published by John Walter, minister, Reading. Printed by John Ritter & Co. for the author, 1810."

By this time it became very evident how tenderly the Lord cared for this little flock. George Miller wrote in prose what was necessary for the Church, John Walter composed hymns and published a hymn-book, and John Dreisbach began to develop his executive talents—a happy triumvirate.

### § 102. The First Camp-meeting.

And now another important step was taken. At that time there was no Church edifice in the Association. Private houses were often too small to accommodate the masses of people, and some persons also hesitated to attend meetings in dwelling-houses. For these reasons Conference ordered that during the coming Summer two campmeetings be held. The first of these meetings was held on the land of Michael Maize, near New Berlin, Pennsylvania, commencing on the 30th of May, 1810. This was the first camp-meeting in the Evangelical Association.\* The other was held on the

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\*) This was also the first German camp-meeting held in America. Although a union camp-meeting was held by the Methodists and United Brethren in 1805, it was only partially German. The first German camp-meeting of the United Brethren was held at Rocky Springs, Pa., on August 17th, 1815, and was, as Bishop Newcomer reported, richly blessed, (*History of the U. B. Church*, Vol. II, p. 63.)

The first camp-meeting of the German Methodists was held in the month of August, 1839, at Carthage, near Cincinnati, Ohio, and was also attended with rich blessings. (*Chr. Apologete*, July 25, 1889.)

But the above camp-meeting at Michael Maize's was the *first German meeting* of

farm of Rev. George Miller, at Allemaengel, Berks County, Pa., in the month of October.

These meetings caused a great stir and excited the curiosity of the people, for they were something entirely new in those parts. Many people came by these means under the sound of the word of truth, and the influence of the Evangelical preachers, who otherwise never attended the meetings. The members came together from all directions, sometimes as far as one hundred miles, with their wagons, tents, etc. We may imagine how these friends felt while thus dwelling together. It was to them also quite new; many saw each other for the first time in their lives, and they were greatly blessed under the powerful preaching of the Word of God and the devotional exercises. The truth made deep impressions upon the people; many were awakened, not a few immediately converted to God, and others soon afterward. Hundreds came to see what might take place, were wrought upon by divine power, and went home unable to find rest until they submitted to the Lord. But Satan perceived that by these meetings an aggressive movement was made upon his kingdom.\*

The brethren John Erb and Matthew Betz, who were able men of God, had splendid success in the formation of a new circuit.

Considerable revivals took place, especially in the Counties York and Franklin, and all about the preaching places the numbers of members

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this kind in America. Many friends came with wagons loaded with tents, provisions, etc., from Schuylkill and Lancaster circuits, a distance of 80 miles. As Bro. Dreisbach reported, the Word was preached with great power, and souls were awakened and converted.

\*) The *origin* of camp-meetings in America has been described as follows: "In the year 1799 two pious brothers named JOHN and CHARLES MCGEE, while on a tour through the state of Kentucky, arrived at a settlement where a Presbyterian minister named MCGREADY was holding a sacramental meeting. The three ministers (one of the McGees being a Methodist and the other a Presbyterian) labored together at the sacramental meeting, which was attended with such an outpouring of the Spirit upon the people, that instead of separating as usual they continued the meeting. Others from the surrounding country, hearing of the extraordinary indications of the divine presence, came in, and the meeting was continued several days, the people meantime supplying themselves with provisions and lodging in covered wagons, huts and booths. The McGees soon appointed a camp-meeting in an adjoining district, and subsequently still another, both of which were signally owned of God in the salvation of souls. These grand mass-meetings exerted no inconsiderable influence on the early religious history of this rapidly growing country. Their excellency as an evangelizing agency, especially in new countries, or in an old country, where, for the want of houses of worship under the control of evangelical Christians, the masses of the people cannot be reached, is apparent. Tens of thousands on earth, and probably millions in Heaven, will forever bless the Lord for camp-meetings, and associate the circle of tents, the cool and leafy grove, the rude altar and preacher's stand, with their espousal to Christ."—*Rev. John Lawrence.*

were increased. They organized 14 new classes and received 200 new members. The brethren took fresh courage, thanked God and became still more clearly convinced that God had called them to revive true and experimental Christianity in the degenerated German Churches of the country. On the other hand, their labors aroused more and more opposition.

"By their labors," says Rev. William W. Orwig, "they drew upon themselves the attention of the Laodicean clergy, still more, and were by them envied and villified, because many of the Church-members under their charge learned by the plain Gospel truth, proclaimed by itinerant preachers, to see their lukewarm and self-deceived state of soul, and expressed their dissatisfaction with the dilapidated state of the Church. Not a few of them left their pastors and joined the despised Albright people.

"But it was especially the doctrine of purity of heart and life, as preached by our ministers, which this Laodicean clergy hated and declared to be erroneous and dangerous, saying that it was impossible to keep the commandments of God, and to lead a holy life in this world, although the word of God insists on this throughout, and requires it as the fruit of faith, excluding, however, all meritorious claims to Heaven. Some declared openly that in this life none can keep the commandments of God, that even the holiest of men sin daily in *thoughts, words* and *deeds*, and that whosoever imagined that he could become free from sin on earth, was fatally mistaken. And whosoever opposed or refused to accept this false doctrine, which tends to lessen the merits of Christ, dishonors Christianity and consoles and strengthens men in their sins, was by them denounced as being self-righteous, sanctimonious, and hypocritical.

"Many of their followers very willingly accepted this doctrine, which is so pleasing to fallen nature, because sinners may thus comfort themselves that they may be good Christians, but at the same time continue daily in sin; as may readily be supposed, their conduct agreed with their belief. The dispute upon this and some other doctrines continued for years, and is in some places not yet settled. However, it cannot be denied that the light of truth has driven this and other errors into the background, in some places exterminating them altogether, which happy result is in no small degree attributable to the instrumentality of the Evangelical Association."\*

**§ 103. A Remarkable Conversation between Rev. John Dreisbach and Bishop Francis Asbury.**

Sometime during this year (1810) a very interesting and important event occurred. It so happened that Bishop Asbury, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, filled a preaching appointment in the village of Halifax, Pa., on the Susquehanna river; on the following day John Dreisbach, Bishop Asbury and Rev. Henry Boehm, also of the M. E. Church, rode to-

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\*) Orwig's *History*, etc. pp. 55, 56.

gether on horseback, along the river towards Harrisburg. Of the conversation that took place among this select company, Dreisbach gave to this writer a very interesting report which is also essentially reproduced in Orwig's History of the Evangelical Association, as follows :

"After we had for some time freely conversed on various Christian topics, the Bishop made me a very liberal and respectable offer, on certain conditions, to unite with his Church. I was to withdraw from the Evangelical Association, and go with these men to Baltimore to attend their Conference, there to join their Church, and then to travel a year with Jacob Gruber, who was then presiding elder, for the purpose of better acquainting myself with the English language, wherein Bro. Gruber might be very useful to me, so that I might then be able to preach, according to circumstances, both in German and English, and I was to receive a salary as if I had traveled on a circuit, etc.

"Moreover the Bishop remarked, that by being able to preach in both languages, I could make myself the more useful, and that among them there would be less danger of my becoming self-exalted and falling away, than in my present position, etc.

"But, however enticing the offer and truthful the statement of the Bishop was, I could not resolve in my mind to take such a treacherous step toward the Evangelical Association. I therefore told the Bishop that we considered ourselves called of God to labor principally among the German population, and that thus far our labors had not been in vain. To this he replied that the German language could not exist much longer in this country, etc. I rejoined that if this should prove to be the case, it would then be time enough to discontinue preaching in German, and gave it as my opinion that this would not very soon occur, but that the German language would rather increase, at least so long as the immigration from the old world continued.

"I then gave him my views, in which I expected my brethren to concur, and made him the following offer : 'If you will give us German circuits, districts and Conferences, we are willing to make your Church *ours*, be one people with you, and have one and the same Church government.' 'This cannot be, it would be inexpedient,' was the Bishop's reply.

After more remarks by these brethren on the same subject they parted, near Harrisburg, in a friendly, brotherly manner. The Bishop embracing Bro. Dreisbach, gave him Fletcher's "Portrait of St. Paul," as a present, and wished him prosperity in the work of the Lord. This took place on the 2d day of August, 1810, and after that time these brethren never saw each other again on earth.

Bishop Asbury's reply to Dreisbach's proposition,—“That would be inexpedient,” had a much greater bearing than the Bishop supposed. Thereby the two Churches remained separate, and the Evangelical Association was necessitated, in order to be obedient to her calling, to labor on in-

dependently—whereby probably the more souls were saved, especially among the Germans of Pennsylvania, and also in later years among German immigrants.

It is quite remarkable that in later years the Methodist Church adopted precisely the policy which Bro. Dreisbach proposed to Bishop Asbury, in giving the German work, begun by Dr. William Nast, the permission to have German Circuits, Districts and Conferences within the Methodist Church, and God has greatly blessed that arrangement to the salvation of thousands of souls. And this presents to us the problem: Was it *providential* that Bishop Asbury rejected the very sensible proposal made by Bro. Dreisbach, or did the Bishop stand in the way of Providence, by adhering to the opinion that largely prevailed in his time—however erroneous subsequent facts proved it to have been—that the German language would soon cease in this country? Who can tell?

#### § 104. Small Salaries.

On this subject Rev. Wm. W. Orwig writes as follows: "The Conference of the preceding year had by resolution made it obligatory upon all itinerants to present at each Conference, a correct report of their income and expenditures. The support of the preachers was, however, very small, and by no means sufficient for their wants. During this year they received *only thirty* dollars. No arrangements had as yet been made for the support of the families of the ministers, and single and married men received almost the same salaries. Now, as thirty dollars does not suffice even to keep an itinerant in clothes during all seasons of the year, and as most of them were poor, it may be easily imagined that most of those who had families soon located, and followed some secular calling. This had a very deleterious effect upon the Association, as in consequence, the Churches were from time to time deprived of the services of the more experienced ministers, and the majority of the preachers in active service were young and inexperienced men. So long as the first zeal for the Lord's work and honor continued it might answer, but afterwards it would be found very convenient and advantageous for the preachers, while at work in the ministry, also to receive a sufficient support for themselves and their families. Yet it was a long time before the ministers of the Evangelical Association received an even approximately adequate support. This neglect was, doubtless, one of the causes why the society for so many years made such slow progress, and its membership, instead of increasing, sometimes even decreased. There was too great a want of practiced and experienced itinerants, and their insufficient support prevented a more rapid increase of their numbers."\*

And yet these *poor* preachers were willing, and did, give part of their

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\* ) Orwig's *History of the Evangelical Association*, pp. 59, 60.

small income to the support of poor members of the Church. They obeyed the injunction of the apostles to "remember the poor," according to the word of the Lord: "The poor you have with you always," and, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of my brethren, ye have done it unto me."\*

These men were indeed entitled to denounce such pretended ministers as preached for "filthy lucre's sake," as *hirelings*.

#### § 105. Fourth Conference.—Instruction of Youth.—Progress.—

##### Letter from John Erb.

The *fourth* session of the Conference was again held at Mühlbach, from the 9th to the 11th of April, 1811. George Miller was again elected chairman and John Dreisbach appointed secretary.

The statistics showed 740 members, 8 itinerant and 12 local preachers.

Leonhart Zimmermann was received into the itinerant ministry on probation, and Henry Niebel was ordained as deacon. The preachers were stationed as follows: Schuykill and Lancaster circuit, John Walter, Matthew Betz and David Jerlitz; Northumberland circuit, John Erb and Leonhart Zimmermann; Franklin and York circuit, John Dreisbach, Henry Niebel and Michael Becker.

The Conference resolved that the preachers should hold "instruction of children" regularly. Until that time this had been done irregularly, which was not satisfactory. These first Evangelical preachers were strong advocates of catechetical instruction as a means whereby to lead young people to Christ, and establish them in a correct knowledge of the plan of salvation, and their labors in this respect were not in vain. This also is an "old Evangelical landmark."

This Conference session was closed according to Conference rule in the following solemn manner, as the record tells us:

"Conference was closed with prayer to God, and with united approval of the aforementioned ordinances and resolutions; and as a token of our willingness to follow our calling and ordinances we subscribe our names as before God, and thereby we also confess that we are under obligation to discharge our duties as our discipline gives us an introduction into the Word of God.

"George Miller, John Walter, John Dreisbach, John Erb, Matthew Betz, Henry Niebel, Michael Becker, David Jerlitz, Leonhart Zimmermann."

It will be seen that the Conference did not have a stereotyped form of making their closing statement, but the rule of signing the proceedings for the purpose expressed, was sacredly kept.

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\*) Gal. 2, 10. Matth. 26, 11. Matth. 25, 40.

Over 200 new members were received into Church fellowship during the year, but the actual increase was only 21. For some reason many members were lost, but this circumstance was nowhere explained. Possibly the facts that the statistical reports were imperfect, and that members were removing beyond the limits of the Church, especially to Western New York, may serve as an explanation. The circuits were greatly enlarged by the addition of new appointments. In the month of May a camp-meeting was held on the land of Philip Breidenstein, near Lebanon, Pa., which was greatly blessed. At Shrewsbury, in York Co., Pa., a great revival took place, which extended its influence into the State of Maryland. Bro. Dreisbach and his colleagues saw beautiful fruits of their labors.—Also in the vicinity of Seitz's and Reber's above Shrewsbury, awakenings took place. At Dover, on the Conewago stream, doors and hearts were opened, among them was also the family of the Reformed minister Ettinger, who afterwards nearly all joined the Evangelical Association. From this family three sons entered the ministry: Adam, Benjamin and Jacob Ettinger; the first two became itinerants. Other itinerant ministers came from these revivals, as, John, Jacob and Adam Kleinfelter, John Frueh, John and Moses Dehoff, and later Joseph Dick. At Shippensburg, in Cumberland County, Pa., also, an awakening took place, from which John Vandersall and Abraham Buchmann stepped into the ranks of the itinerancy. This was the glorious harvest of the good seed that had been sown. Also on Northumberland circuit, under the labors of John Erb and Leonhart Zimmermann great revivals took place, and they received more than 100 new members into the Church.

A letter from John Erb to Bro. Walter, written during this Conference year, throws so much light upon the spirit and manner of these men and their labors that we insert it here. It is as follows:

The 14th of January, 1812.

To John Walter:

My dear brother in Christ:—May God be your portion and Christ your support. I will let you know that I, praise the Lord, am still well, and I hope these lines will find you all enjoying the same blessing. I herewith inform you that I am still as determined to continue in God's work with soul and body, as I have ever been. And I cannot forbear to write to you of the work of the Lord on our circuit. The Lord has done great things for our circuit, and to Him be eternal praise. Many souls have been converted during this year. The fire is burning on the circuit, and we hear the praise of Immanuel in the tents of the righteous. Our friends are in earnest, and continue steadfastly in the work, as those who are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

Further, I cannot refrain from writing what God has wrought at our watch-meetings. Eternal praise be to God for his grace. During these meetings fifteen souls were saved. We have received seventy persons into

Church fellowship, the most of whom are pardoned, and yet many others are penitent. The deacon in Derrstown (Lewisburg), was converted, and the whole village is in commotion. God be praised, for he works mightily at all places. O brother, what will not God do for us! Only have strong faith in proclaiming the Gospel, and pray for us. The devil is very angry and roars terribly; his emissaries oppose us as much as possible. They attempt to close up the breaches with hypocritical work, but the Lord sends heavy showers, and causes the breaches to become wider than before.

The persecutors are very furious; they have cut my cloak and saddle into pieces, and try to place many obstacles in the way, in order to check the work of God, but thanks be unto God, who equips me more with power and faith to carry on his work. Long ago they have waited for my end but it seems as though the Lord would again grant me good health. Further, I think there will be five brethren who will start out by next Spring to preach the Gospel. God be praised that he sends us laborers.

I salute Bro. Miller and his family, and Bro. Betz and Bro. Jerlitz, and all the brethren and sisters. The Conference will be held at Dreisbach's. The "big meeting" on the 4th of April will be at Meesen's, and on the 11th at Spangler's. I send this letter with Michael Deibler, whom I commend to you in the Lord, to instruct him in the work of God. We desired very much to see Bro. Weber. Our circuit is too large for two to travel, so we wish he would soon come and help us.

January 27th, 1812.

On the 25th the Lord wrought mightily in our midst. Ten souls were converted and many others are seeking. God be praised, for the miracles of His grace! O brother, what will the Lord not do for us! Only continue earnestly in prayer and have faith in God, and He will do great things for us. Pray for us. Brother Zimmermann and the brothers and sisters salute you. From your brother and co-laborer in the Gospel,

JOHN ERB.

In Northumberland County."

What holy zeal, faith and love for souls and the work of God breathe through these simple, artless words. Nearly one hundred years later they are still an inspiration to the like-minded reader.

From Bro. Erb's letter we see how the preachers notified each other of the times and places of their "big meetings." John Dreisbach writes concerning their mutual assistance at this time (1812), as follows: "The preachers informed each other of times and places of their 'big meetings.' We now had no presiding elder nor Bishop, but we were *co-workers* with each other, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was with us abundantly. We enjoyed such a measure of the love of God that such mutual service was a pleasure." Envy was a stranger among these servants of Jesus Christ; the common and all-absorbing object was the glory of God and the

salvation of souls. This spirit is the true pattern for Evangelical preachers.

George Miller assisted the brethren, as his feeble health permitted, in casting forth the Gospel net. He also wrote a small book, entitled: "Practical Christianity" (Thätiges Christenthum), which has become a blessing to many, and deserves to be read by many more.

Mr. Miller was also requested by this Conference to compile "an Episcopal plan of government," which involved a considerable enlargement of the Discipline relative to Church government. Henceforth he labored at this task. In 1813 he promised Conference "to finish the addition to our Discipline, if God would grant the grace." He had at that time already commenced the improvement and enlargement of the Discipline, and labored at it until his decease in 1816.

The salary of the preachers reached this year the sum of *fifty dollars*. This was unheard of in the history of the little Church.—Still those preachers having families were constrained to repeat: "Lord, what is this among so many?"

#### §106. Fifth Conference. Parsonages to Be Built.

On the 2d of April, 1812, the *fifth* session of the Conference began in the house of Martin Dreisbach, Union county, Pa. We find that 12 itinerant preachers attended, and it was reported that the number of members was 761. George Miller was elected chairman and John Dreisbach secretary.

Frederick Schauer, Abraham Huth, Michael Deibler and Robert McCray were received on trial into the itinerancy. Some of the old circuits were divided, and a new one formed in the State of New York. The Association now had *five* circuits and one mission. John Erb was ordained elder. The stationing resulted as follows: Schuylkill circuit, Henry Niebel, Abraham Huth; Lancaster circuit, John Erb, Michael Deibler; York circuit, Matthew Betz, Michael Becker; Franklin circuit, John Walter, David Jerlitz; Northumberland circuit, Leonhart Zimmermann, Frederick Schauer; New York circuit, John Dreisbach, Robert McCray.

Conference resolved that arrangements be made for the building of parsonages on several circuits, which was a progressive step. The instruction of youth in Christian doctrine was again ordered. This session concluded its business with even a still more solemn declaration than heretofore—thus:

"Our Conference was closed *in the name of God*, with united approval of the aforementioned ordinances, and in token of our willingness, and that we have obligated ourselves to obey God, and our order, in accordance with the Word of God, we sign our names in the presence of God, and close with prayer in faith and confidence to God, who has thus united us in peace and love among ourselves, in hope that He who made us willing, will also en-

able us to do according to His good pleasure, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen !

"George Miller, John Walter, John Dreisbach, John Erb, Matthew Betz, Henry Niebel, Michael Becker, Leonhart Zimmermann, David Jerlitz, Michael Deibler, Abraham Huth, John Buchwalter, Robert McCray, Frederick Schauer."

During the year 129 new members were received, but the increase was only 35. The question, "Where are the nine? i. e. the 94, remained unanswered. The Discipline was very strictly applied in those days, but there were not so many expulsions during the year. The good brethren were not expert statisticians.

We may, however, direct attention to the fact that a very serious war with England was approaching, which caused great excitement and unrest among the people, and doubtless many minds were thereby led away from divine things. Some misunderstandings and temptations also crept in among several of the preachers, and a few became unfaithful. These things had, of course, a more or less detrimental effect.

"Want of extensive experience on the part of many of its members, and also some of its ministers, was an especial cause of many difficulties, and of sore trials for the Association in those days; however, similar things we meet with in nearly all Christian denominations, in their incipient state, to a greater or less extent.

"From a desire to extend and increase the work as speedily as possible, all such as showed the least qualifications for the ministry, were urged to be obedient to the divine call, and to set out as heralds of the Gospel.— Thus it came to pass that frequently young men, without sufficient experience, firmness and fidelity, entered the ministry, and were afterward unable to withstand the many temptations, allurements, inconveniences and dangers to which an itinerant is exposed, and hence became either discouraged or fell away, to the great injury and impediment of the cause. Against such difficulties and obstructions the Evangelical Association had to struggle for a number of years, nor have they entirely disappeared in our days. Yet the Association in those years was never guilty of the crime of sparing and tolerating in its connection, immoral or faithless preachers. The office of the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven was, at all times, faithfully and even rigorously exercised; offenders were tried and dealt with, according to their deserts, both preachers and laymen."\*

#### § 107. Failure of the Mission in New York.

Notwithstanding the difficulties and hinderances aforementioned, awakenings and revivals took place on the different fields, and the borders of the Church were extended.

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\*) Orwig's *History etc.*, p. 63.

But the mission in the State of New York failed, to a great extent. The preachers did not find as many Germans as they had expected in the vicinity of Seneca, N. Y., and other circumstances added to the discouragement of the brethren. They then left the work to Rev. Christian Wolf, a local preacher, who continued to labor on with success; at a later time help was sent to him and a circuit was formed.\* The returned brethren found open doors along both branches of the Susquehanna river, and when in the Fall of the year, on account of certain events, changes had to be made on the circuits, they were needed on those fields. There was a change of preachers during the year, which gave general satisfaction.

### § 108. Dreisbach's Severe Conflict.

During this year Bro. Dreisbach had to pass through a very severe inward trial, which almost crushed him. Nervous prostration and depression befell him, which drove him to the verge of despair. Of this he gives us the following report :

"I had the most fearful trials and conflicts to endure, which forced me

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\*) This Bro. Wolf, whose name appears frequently in this history, was one of the first of those who entertained Mr. Albright and his Co-laborers in the Susquehanna Valley.

When, in 1806, that great revival took place through the labors of George Miller (see page 80), it reached also Lewisburg, then called Derrstown, in honor of Lewis Derr, who was the founder of the village, which received the name of Lewisburg in later years, derived from Mr. Derr's first name, Lewis. A strong class was formed there, and Bro. Wolf was made its leader, and soon afterward also local preacher; as such he exerted a strong, blessed influence for good.

Already in A. D. 1805 an emigration was started from the Susquehanna Valley to Western New York, to settle upon the so-called "Indian lands," which had been opened there by the Government in 1795 for settlement. Bro. Wolf was also influenced by the "moving fever" to emigrate to that "Genesee country," and removed to Seneca County, N. Y., in 1807. He was the very first man of the "Albright People" in that State. He brought to his new home the same spirit and earnestness which he had manifested in Pennsylvania, and induced a few families to unite with him in the work of the Lord. He visited also other settlements, and prepared the way for the mission mentioned above (in 1812), to which his nephews, John Dreisbach and Robert McCray, were sent. After these brethren had left that field, Bro. Wolf labored on and formed a few classes. When, in A. D. 1816, Jacob Kleinfelter was sent there, and John Dreisbach came there again as Presiding Elder, they found the banner of the Church planted firmly. The work was established more and more, and also extended in other directions.

Bro. Wolf was not only a pious and influential man, but one who remained "steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." Upon his plain tomb-stone may be read the following inscription :

CHRISTIAN WOLF,  
Died June 21st, 1833,  
Aged 54 years,  
2 months and 20 days.

almost into the 'Slough of Despond,' so that it often seemed that I must go down and my feeble craft would sink to the bottom of the sea. My harp had become an instrument of lamentation and my song was turned into weeping. Yet help came just in the time of my greatest need. Blessed be the name of the Lord! After these struggles and trials the most glorious victories followed. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

What caused these trials to be more painful, was the fact, that while they depressed him, he became weaker in his preaching, and fell under the suspicion of having been captivated by the love of the world, and a very rude reprimand was administered to him, by an older preacher, who entirely misunderstood his pitiable condition—this made it much the worse.

It was no wonder, however, that such times of depression came upon this untiring laborer. He began his itinerancy in his *seventeenth* year, when a mere stripling, and underwent the extraordinary hardships and self-denials connected with it; in addition to this he kept many a *fasting-day* and had many *sleepless nights*. And now, after six years of such over-work, liver troubles and nervous disturbances befell him. Like Paul, who had similar experiences, he was compelled to labor on with "weakness, fear and great trembling." But God strengthened and raised up his servant again.

#### § 109. Pressing Forward.—Pioneers.

The *sixth* Conference was again held in Buffalo Valley, at the house of Father Martin Dreisbach, on April 21–23, 1813. George Miller was again chairman and John Dreisbach secretary. Two young preachers were deposed from the ministry and expelled from the Church on account of immoral conduct. John Erb located on account of feeble health. Adam Hennig, Abraham Buchmann, John Kleinfelter, Jacob Kleinfelter, John Stambach and John Walter, Jr., were received into the ministry on probation. David Jerlitz and Leonhart Zimmermann were ordained deacons, and Matthew Betz and Henry Niebel elders. The stationing was as follows :

Schuykill circuit, John Walter, Jacob Kleinfelter, John Walter, Jr.; Northumberland and Center circuits, Matthew Betz, Robert McCray, Abraham Buchmann, John Stambach; Franklin circuit, Henry Niebel, Michael Deibler; York circuit, Leonhart Zimmermann, Frederick Schauer. John Dreisbach, Adam Hennig, David Jerlitz and John Kleinfelter were ordered to form new circuits westward from the old ones, or in other words, do *pioneer missionary work*. The number of members now amounted to 796, with 15 itinerant preachers.

Conference closed again in the following solemn manner: "The Conference came to a close in the name of God, with the united approval of the above mentioned proceedings; and as a token of our willingness, and that

we have obligated ourselves to obey God and our ordinances, we sign our names, in the presence of God, and close with prayer and confidence in God, who has thus united us in peace and love among ourselves, in hope that He who made us willing, will also give us the power to do according to His good pleasure, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

“George Miller, John Walter, John Dreisbach, John Erb, Matthew Betz, Henry Niebel, David Jerlitz, Leonhart Zimmermann, Michael Deibler, Robert McCray, Frederick Schauer, Adam Hennig, Abraham Buchmann, John Stambach, John Kleinfelter, Jacob Kleinfelter, John Walter, Jr.”

During the year the work was much revived and extended on the old circuits. John Dreisbach and Adam Hennig “broke the ice,” by going across the Allegheny mountains into Somerset and the adjacent counties, and as they met with the greatest success in Somerset county they called their new field of labor Somerset circuit. They received during the year nearly sixty members, and formed three classes in the Glades, Brothers Valley, and Conemaugh. In the latter class Jacob Paul was made class-leader, and though he was but 15 years old, proved himself to be both manly and faithful.

David Jerlitz and John Kleinfelter chose for their field of labor the Counties of Huntingdon and Bedford, east of the Allegheny Mountains, where they were gladly received—formed several classes and gathered a very considerable number of converted souls, and such as were anxious to be saved, during the year. In the following year this new circuit was added to the western part of Northumberland circuit and called Bedford; afterward it was named Center circuit.

John Dreisbach was instructed by Conference to visit, during the year, several circuits in the Eastern part of the Conference district, to assist the brethren at their general and camp-meetings, as there was as yet no presiding elder. These meetings were greatly blessed, many souls were converted and believers edified.

“In this way,” says Rev. Wm. W. Orwig, “the first Evangelical preachers had to go to work, in order to extend their fields of labor. It was not as is frequently the case in our days, when members settle in new parts and cordially bid their preachers welcome upon their arrival, and provide a good home for them. They had to *break ground*, and often encountered great opposition and persecution. The roads in many places were yet new and rough, leading over steep mountains and through deep valleys; the dwellings of the new settlers were small, inconvenient, and often so well aired that the wakeful itinerants could see the stars from their couches at night, and feel the falling snow, as well as wind and cold.

“This required self-denial and humility, but was, in many instances, also injurious to their health, yet it could not be expected otherwise in this work: and if such a spirit of self-denial, enterprise and earnestness, and

such a zeal for the spread of the Kingdom of God, had kept pace with other improvements in the Church, how much more rapidly would it spread in our days, and how many precious souls could be saved, who, alas, are probably lost—and who will be held responsible for it? \*

#### § 110. Death of Rev. Matthew Betz.

Although the year 1813 was in many respects a blessed and successful one, it also had its afflictions. The active and very successful worker, Rev. Matthew Betz, was called from Zion's walls to his home in heaven. His disease was pneumonia, which took him away quickly. Although his services were yet greatly needed, and were so greatly blessed, yet he had to bid adieu to his brethren and depart. He was a pious, humble and very successful minister. The Lord gave him many spiritual children, among whom was the immortal John Seybert, who afterward became Bishop and whom the Church can never forget. He served five years as itinerant preacher, and his short career was a continuous succession of victories. He died in the house of Bro. Steffey, near Boalsburg, Center county, Pa., and his remains rest in the Presbyterian graveyard, near a place then called Slab-Cabin-Meetinghouse. This was a heavy stroke and a mysterious providence for the brethren. But there came still other losses upon the little group of soldiers of the Lord.

That wonderful hero, John Walter was compelled to retire from the work on account of feeble health. Robt. McCray had to be deposed on account of unfaithfulness, and John Walter, Jr., traveled but a short time and then left his work. Thus the little Conference lost four laborers. But the others did not yield to discouragement. They knew that their work was the *work of God*.

#### § 111. John Dreisbach the First Presiding Elder.

The *seventh* session of the Conference was held again in the house of Father Martin Dreisbach, on April 13-15, 1814. John Dreisbach was elected chairman and Henry Niebel secretary. Thomas Brewer, Michael Walter and Henry Stauffer were received as ministers on probation. Frederick Schauer, Abraham Buchmann, Adam Hennig and John Stambach, were ordained as deacons.

The most important transaction of this session was the election of John Dreisbach as Presiding Elder. This election was every way most fitting. Dreisbach now had considerable experience in the work, and was perhaps the only one that had been over the entire Church territory; he had served as junior preacher, as preacher in charge, as pioneer missionary, was well established spiritually and doctrinally, was conversant with the English and German languages, was gifted with a strong mind and fine administrative

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\*) Orwig's *History of the Evangelical Association*, pp. 69-70.

talents, was an excellent preacher, and his tall person and impressive appearance commanded respect wherever he went—in short, the work needed just such an officer, and he was in all respects fitted for the office. Thus the Lord provided for His work.

Dreisbach was the *first* presiding elder in the Evangelical Association, and the exigencies of the work made him practically almost a Bishop. Though he governed and superintended kindly, yet when it became necessary he administered discipline very firmly and inflexibly, as his diaries frequently indicate. His district was the entire Church territory, extending about 300 miles from east to west, and 100 miles wide—to be traveled over on horseback four times a year.

The preachers were stationed at this session as follows : Conference district, John Dreisbach, P. E.; Union circuit, Henry Niebel and John Kleinfelter ; Bedford circuit, David Jerlitz and Michael Walter ; Franklin circuit, Frederick Schauer ; York circuit, John Stambach and Thomas Brewer ; Lancaster circuit, Leonhart Zimmermann and Henry Stauffer ; Schuylkill circuit, Adam Hennig ; Somerset circuit, Abraham Buchmann and Jacob Kleinfelter.

The membership amounted to 1016, an increase of 220 during the past Conference year. Itinerants 13.

The Conference closed its session again very solemnly :—

“Our Conference closed in the name of God, with the united approval of the above named ordinances ; and in token of our willingness, and that we have obligated ourselves to obey God and our order, we sign our names as in the presence of God, and close with believing prayer and confidence in God, who has thus united us in peace and love among ourselves, and hope that He who made us willing, will also work in us to do according to His good pleasure, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

“John Dreisbach, Henry Niebel, George Miller, John Erb, Leonhart Zimmermann, David Jerlitz, Frederick Schauer, John Kleinfelter, Adam Hennig, Jacob Kleinfelter, John Stambach, Thomas Brewer, Abraham Buchmann, Michael Walter, Henry Stauffer.”

### § 112. A Year of Blessings.

The Conference year proved to be one full of blessings. Among the preachers peace and fidelity reigned. John Dreisbach writes : “We held four camp-meetings, fourteen big meetings, and eight watch-nights, all of which I attended, and nearly all of them were crowned with conversions and an advance of the children of God in divine life. The camp-meetings especially were times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.” Bro. Orwig writes :—

“At that time the members and ministers were yet in the habit of attending camp and general meetings from great distances ; and as such meetings were as yet something new to most of them, they took a deep in-

terest in them, and were generally greatly edified and encouraged. Now, as among the crowds that assembled at such meetings, there were also many enemies of the truth and blasphemers of the Holy Spirit, who there heard and saw many things that were strange and unintelligible to them; and besides, being filled with the very worst suspicions, even before they came: such meetings served not only to make the Society more rapidly known, but also to increase the contempt and hatred against it. The enemies of the cross circulated some of the most abominable lies concerning these people; and the further they spread, the more they increased, each one, through whose lips they passed, adding his part thereto, as is usual in such cases.

"Thus it happened that persons in some parts of the country, who knew these people merely from hearsay, dreaded their coming into their neighborhood as much as pestilence itself. In these fears they generally were confirmed by their pastors, who represented the itinerants as the false prophets and deceivers who were to come in the last times, and with all their might warned their congregations against them as the most dangerous men. In consequence of this, many well disposed and even religious persons had become filled with prejudices against them, who afterward, upon closer acquaintance, acknowledged them as God's people, and subsequently joined the Society.

"As the sermons on such occasions were usually very plain and pointed, a great number were generally deeply impressed, many of whom were at once made acquainted with their low condition, and turned unto the Lord; and when they went to their homes, deeply wounded in their conscience, they found no rest, until they sought it in the blood of Christ. Such glorious results established the propriety and usefulness of such meetings beyond a doubt, and the friends were thus encouraged to continue them from time to time, in spite of the persecutions and disturbances which were generally in their train.—But we do not deny that imprudent, ignorant or hypocritical persons may sometimes have given just cause for censure, by their improper conduct during the exercises. And that such offensive conduct, which proved very detrimental to the good cause, was too often overlooked, partly from fear of hurting the feelings of the innocent, or for want of better insight into the great injury arising therefrom, cannot be denied either.—But it is strange that religious organizations, as well as individuals, should make so much ado about isolated cases of extravagance and hypocrisy, regarding them as certain evidences of the spuriousness of the entire work of such as are annoyed and grieved by these unpleasant occurrences; while they themselves have so many proofs of hypocrisy continually staring them in the face, of a great majority of their own Church-members, attending public worship in all seasons, the year round, with impenitent and worldly hearts, others devote themselves openly to the service of the joys of the

world, and sin. Yet so it is; men always see the splinter in their neighbor's eyes sooner than the beam in their own."\*

As these Evangelical preachers became more and more prominent in the eye of the public, and developed a powerful influence upon the people wherever they labored, it is quite in place to insert here a characteristic description of them, by one who was a very competent judge, because of his intimate acquaintance with them :

"The preachers of the Evangelical Association were, in a classical point of view, *unlearned men*. Many of them had perhaps never read any other books besides the Bible, when they set out to preach. A few could not even read correctly. But these things we do not state here to their praise; for they certainly were not the cause of the good effects of their preaching. Nor do we wish to be understood as if it were our opinion, that men with so limited a knowledge of theology, history and other useful sciences, were able to explain the fundamental doctrines and deep passages of the Bible, and to defend them against scoffers and infidels, or to labor in every manner for the kingdom of God, in which the learned, pious and devoted minister can work. But this was not their calling and object. Christianity among the people where they lived and labored, needed not so much a thorough explanation of its deep and mysterious doctrines, as a revival. To explain its theory was less necessary than to enforce its practice.

"The great desideratum was, to show to the sinner his lost and dangerous condition out of Christ, in his natural state—to convince him that the observance of the external duties of Christianity, without regeneration or a change of heart, is insufficient for salvation,—to convince him that he must come as a condemned sinner, penitently, prayerfully, and believingly, to the great Friend and Saviour of sinners, in order to be pardoned and adopted into the family of God.

"This simple plan of salvation they had learned by their own experience, and could therefore preach it with the joyful assurance of having themselves an interest in Christ, and amid the attending influence and unction of the Holy Ghost. And herein lay the secret of the success of their labors. Hence the common people, who at that time were still more ignorant than they are now, understood their sermons much better than those of well educated preachers. And being able, plainly and impressively to explain to the sinner the way of obtaining peace with God, as they had themselves experienced it; so they understood also, successfully, to explain to, and inculcate on, believers the doctrines of Christ and his apostles, with reference to watching and praying, self-denial, growing in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, perfecting holiness in the fear of God; the practice of love to God and our fellow-men, perseverance in hope, faith and charity, as well as that with regard to future rewards and punish-

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\*) Orwig's *History*, etc., pp. 72, 78.

ments. And was not this the method of the apostles and their successors everywhere, except then and there where circumstances required more? And where this was the case, the more experienced and talented among our preachers were, by the grace of God, soon qualified for this also.

"By preaching almost daily, many of the ministers made rapid progress in qualifying themselves for a proper discharge of the duties of their calling; and those who persevered in reading and searching, as well as in daily prayer, were soon able to compete, in this respect, with most of the educated preachers of those days. And as to spirit, power, life, and effect, they were, on the whole, by far their superiors: hence the glorious results of their labors."\*

### § 113. Old Evangelical Camp-meetings.

After the foregoing statements concerning the Evangelical Association it may be very acceptable to learn more in detail, how they conducted their camp-meetings under the management of the presiding elder, John Dreisbach. He gives us the following memoranda in his diary of a camp-meeting which was held near Adam Ettinger's, in York County, Pa., beginning June 1st, 1814. He says:

"On the 1st of June the friends† assembled, and Bro. Schauer preached in the evening, on the words: 'Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong,' (1 Cor. 16. 13). Bro. Niebel exhorted and closed with prayer. Though I felt weak in body, I had great concern for the meeting, and had faith to believe that souls would be converted and believers sanctified.

"Henry Niebel, John Erb, John Kleinfelter, Leonhart Zimmermann, Henry Stauffer, Thomas Brewer, Frederick Schauer, John Stambach and myself were the preachers—9 in all.

"June 2d. To-day I preached from the passage: 'Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit,' etc., (1 Peter 1. 22). I had great grace and felt much concerned for the unconverted. Some dropped down like dead persons. The friends were deeply convinced of their need of sanctification. In the afternoon Bro. Erb. preached on the address of Paul and the alarm of Felix. After the sermon I exhorted penitents now to look to Jesus by faith, and told the friends that they should believe unto sanctification, and requested all who were willing to do so to raise their hands, after which we engaged in prayer. There was a special degree of the sanctifying power of God among us. Many, according to their testimony, received the grace of sanctification. I do not know that

\*) Orwig's *History*, etc., pp. 75. 76.

†) This pleasant word "friends" was then current among the Evangelicals as meaning the members of the Church, and such as affiliated with them in prayer and cross-bearing.

I ever felt the power of God stronger in me than I did to-day, while preaching on the subject of Holiness. My body and soul were quickened, and I realized myself what I preached to others. God be praised for it. This meeting was richly blessed with the experience of conversion and sanctification.

"On the 3d of June, Bro. Stambach preached in the forenoon on the words: 'I am the light of the world.' Bro. Stauffer and I exhorted. At 1 o'clock I held a blessed Quarterly Conference. In the afternoon Bro. Zimmerman preached, Bro. Erb exhorted, and I closed with prayer. In the evening Bro. Kleinfelter preached on the words: 'For to be carnally-minded is death,' (Rom. 8. 6.) and an African preached on Romans 5. 1. To-day the power of God was in the camp—three souls were converted, and there was a wonderful blessing among the people of God. Blessed be God!

✓ "June 4. This morning we held sacramental services, and although it rained so heavily that we all became wet, we had a greatly blessed time. In the afternoon Bro. Niebel preached on Ephesians 5. 1, with good effect. After him I preached on John 13. 35. We had convicting power, and at the close of the meeting a person fell to the ground and cried for mercy. Her parents tried to drag her away, but the friends would not permit this. The unconverted bystanders were ready to give blows. I then went to the person and asked her whether she wished to go with her parents—she said, 'No, I must have forgiveness,' and, praise the Lord, she found it, too. In the evening Bro. Erb was to preach, but there came a fearful thunderstorm; after prayer I ordered the friends to retire to their tents. To-day 5 or 6 souls found salvation. I went to bed and rested sweetly in the arms of Jesus.

"Sunday, June 5th. I preached at 9 o'clock in the morning on Luke 19. 41, 42, and the word had its blessed effect. The people seemed to be captivated by the power of the word. Bro. Erb exhorted with great power and effect. Bro. Niebel preached at 3 o'clock in the afternoon on Matth. 3. 7-10, 'O generation of vipers,' etc., etc., with good effect. I followed him in English on Psalm, 50. 14, 15, and had great freedom and grace. Several souls were saved to-day. There was shouting in the camp of the King. Blessed be God for this victory. In the evening Bro. Zimmermann preached on the words: 'And now, children, abide in him,' (1 John 2. 28.) This sermon was a good one. At the close came a great thunderstorm—but amidst the roaring of thunder the friends were greatly blessed.

"On the 6th of June I delivered an exhortation in the morning, and called up those who were converted during the meeting—they numbered 14. Besides, several backsliders were reclaimed, and I believe some of the friends received sanctification. It rained very hard this morning, which

hindered us in the farewell-taking, but the divine blessing was upon us so mightily that we left the camp-ground shouting the praises of God."

This was an "old-evangelical" camp-meeting. There was great concern and fervent prayer for the salvation of souls. The word of God was preached with power and without respect of persons—sinners were converted, believers sanctified, and the praises of God sounded through the beautiful forest.

At a camp-meeting held on the land of Daniel Bertolet, on the 31st of August, Bro. Dreisbach preached from 1 Tim. 6. 12. He says, "I had great grace to preach both the law and the Gospel to believers and unbelievers. It had a powerful effect unto the sanctification of many." At this meeting a backslidden minister was reclaimed, and a number of sinners were converted. Concerning an experience meeting held during the meeting, Dreisbach says: "To my recollection I have never heard more sound testimonies of sanctification than at this meeting. Many also felt the need of it very deeply."

At another camp-meeting the preachers first held a consultation how to conduct the meeting with a view of attaining the best results. At this meeting Dreisbach preached, of which he says: "God blessed me richly. While preaching regeneration and sanctification through faith, converting and sanctifying power came upon us and penetrated soul and body. Praise the Lord! I believe that many of the friends were renewed and strengthened in holiness." John Walter and others also preached very successfully at this meeting. The results were "fourteen conversions, and twenty-eight professed sanctification."

Of still another camp-meeting he writes: "God be praised for his blessing and grace! Twenty-four souls were converted, and sixteen professed sanctification."

He also writes concerning another camp-meeting, that the meeting was such a burden on his heart that he went about "bowed down," like David, but then he cast all his cares upon God, and soon after a great outpouring of divine power followed.

At these meetings the old brethren preached repentance, faith, justification, regeneration and sanctification with great positiveness and force. At times they also made use of decisive measures, for instance, seekers for entire sanctification were called forward to pray specially for this grace, and were sometimes requested to manifest their decision and faith in Christ for sanctification by raising their right hands, which was frequently followed by mighty out-pourings of divine power. However these things were not practiced in the sense of stereotyped measures; other methods were also employed, adapted to time and circumstances and other conditions. To employ special measures under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and sanctified reason and expediency—for sinners and Christians—is also an *old-Evangelical land-mark*.

**§ 114. Eighth Conference Session.—More Victories.**

The *eighth* Conference met on the 4th of April, 1815, in the house of Jacob Kleinfelter, in York County, Pennsylvania. Henry Niebel was elected chairman, and he appointed John Kleinfelter secretary. David Thomas, Jacob Brewer and John Dehoff were received into the ministry on probation, and John Kleinfelter, Jacob Kleinfelter and Thomas Brewer were ordained as deacons. David Jerlitz located.

The conference district was divided into two presiding elder districts, and Henry Niebel was elected as the second presiding elder. The districts were named respectively, *Canaan* and *Salem*—a biblical instead of geographical nomenclature. But experience taught them soon afterward that such names were geographically very inconvenient, and they dropped them.

The fifteen itinerants present were stationed as follows :

Canaan District, John Dreisbach, P. E.; Franklin circuit, Thomas Brewer, John Dehoff; York circuit, Abraham Buchman, David Thomas; Lancaster circuit, John Kleinfelter; Schuylkill circuit, Leonhart Zimmermann; Salem District, Henry Niebel, P. E.; Union circuit, John Stambach, Jacob Kleinfelter; Bedford and Center circuits, Frederick Schauer, Henry Stauffer; Somerset circuit, Adam Hennig, Michael Walter.

The membership amounted to 1108, an increase of 92 during the past Conference year. The time of the Conference session was now transferred from April to June, whereby the next Conference year was lengthened to 14 months, and after that, Conference met for many years in the beginning of the month of June.

The record describes the solemn conclusion of Conference as follows :

"Conference was closed in the name of God, with the united approval of the above described transactions, and as a token of willingness, and that we have obligated ourselves to obey God and our order, we sign our names in the presence of God, and close with prayer in faith and confidence to God, who thus has united us in peace and love among ourselves, in hope that He who worked in us to will, also will give us the power to do according to his good pleasure, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

"Henry Niebel, John Kleinfelter, John Dreisbach, Leonhart Zimmermann, David Jerlitz, Adam Hennig, Frederick Schauer, John Stambach, Jacob Kleinfelter, Thomas Brewer, Michael Walter, Henry Stauffer, Abraham Buchmann, Jacob Brewer, John Dehoff, David Thomas."

The members of the Annual Conference continued, in the future, thus to sign their proceedings, in accordance with the Conference rule adopted in 1810, which has also been the uniform practice of all the subsequent different Annual Conferences, and was also in course of time formally introduced into the Discipline as a law, in the order of procedure for General Conference. We will, however, omit this in the future, and instead, incorporate only the signing of the proceedings of the General Conference.

This was one of the most blessed years of those times. All the circuits, with the exception of Schuylkill, had extended their bounds, and increased considerable in membership.

The six camp-meetings that were held during that year, had generally been crowned with glorious success. The word had been gladly received in many houses and regions, and many hearts had experienced its happy influence. At some of these meetings, especially that in York County, on the land of John Seitz, and another near Manheim, Lancaster County, Pa., on the land of John Seybert, the brethren encountered great opposition and disturbance by mobs. At the first, an occurrence took place which deserves to be mentioned here. A very daring scoffer, on the upper end of the tent ground, was struck to the ground by the power of God, where he lay helpless and in abject terror, surrounded by his comrades, who also were as if seized by the terrors of the Lord. Nearly all who saw him, recognized in his visitation the finger of God.—Another wicked man, overcome by anger, commenced to bellow like an ox during the sermon, and hurried out of the meeting like a madman.—The word had similar effects, when preached by Jesus himself: some were moved and drawn by it, but others became *full of wrath*, so that they gnashed with their teeth, foamed with anger, and would have destroyed everything, had it been in their power. During the meeting near Manheim, one Sunday night, a great disturbance was made. There came a mob of about 40 persons, who were armed with clubs, their shirt-sleeves rolled up, and ready for the attack, threatening to break up and scatter the meeting; in which, however, they were disappointed, although they made some disturbance. At one time, as is believed, they were put to flight by the united prayers of the children of God, and the next time they were put down by taking prisoner and securing one of their leaders. One of the camp-meetings held during this year, which was under Henry Niebel's superintendence, in Somerset County, Pa., is said to have been remarkably blessed and victorious. Another was held in Buffalo Valley, Union County, Pa., on the land of Martin Dreisbach, which was also greatly blessed, and another near Jonestown, Lebanon County, Pa., on the land of Father Faber, where likewise the arm of the Lord was revealed. "Here," says Bro. Dreisbach, "our dear Brother Walter preached once more for us, from 1 Tim. 2, 8, to the great edification of the members." At this meeting he exclaimed publicly, "We shall take this country, and the work of conversion will be extended to Europe yet."

The big meetings and watch-nights had also been richly blessed during this year. The former generally began on Saturday at 1 or 2 o'clock, P. M., and were continued over Sunday. On Sunday, after the morning services, the Lord's supper was administered. At camp-meetings this was generally done on Friday morning, followed by an experience meeting, in which the children of God related their experience before all the congregation, where-

by the membership was greatly edified and encouraged, and even unawakened souls were often deeply impressed.

### § 115. Dreisbach's Visits to Philadelphia.

During this year (1815), Bro. Dreisbach visited Philadelphia several times. The first visit occurred in the month of May. On Sunday, the 7th of May, he preached in a Freemason hall in the fourth house from Poplar street, on North 2d street, and also in the house of George Fischer. On his second visit, in November, he preached in the Commissioner's room, on 3rd street.—It is remarkable that he preached his first sermon very near the spot where in after years a great Evangelical congregation was gathered which built the first Church of the Evangelical Association in Philadelphia.

### § 116. Happy Death of George Miller.—Characteristics.

A very painful event took place during this Conference year, namely, the decease of George Miller, on the 5th day of April, 1816. Thus death broke again into the ranks of the small ministerial army and took off one of their leading captains, who, as we have seen, was a powerful preacher, an energetic and talented leader, and, to some extent, a useful writer, and thus, under God, a main pillar of the little Church.

Since he had that remarkable dream on Christmas night, 1808, and had to leave his circuit thereafter on account of sickness, he never rallied sufficiently to take a regular charge. Conference each year requested him to labor in assisting the brethren as much as he could, which he faithfully did, but often broke down again and passed through severe attacks of sickness; in the month of December, 1818, he was confined to his bed by consumption. For more than three months he suffered severe pain, but at the same time enjoyed the consolations of the Lord, and saw his redemption approaching, full of the assurance that Christ was his life, and to die would be his gain. Three days before his departure he was attacked by severe pains, and on the fifth day of April, 1816, came his release. His last words were: "*I know that I shall be saved.*" His remains were buried at New Berlin, Pa. Bro. Henry Niebel preached the funeral sermon from Rev. 3, 10: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." This faithful servant of the Lord was only 42 years and nearly 2 months old, and hence departed when he was in his best years, and entered into the rest and joy of his Lord after having been in the ministry about 10 years.

Mr. Miller was a systematic and a very powerful preacher. He attacked the sins that prevailed among the people with the "sword of the Spirit," nor did he spare the "evils cleaving to Christians," in the least. Out of his mouth the word of God came like a two-edged sword. But he could also comfort the people of God. His manner of preaching was both

animated and instructive, he could both "shine and thunder." He often selected his texts upon his knees, with the open Bible before him, and then studied them with much meditation and prayer. He divided the subject systematically, and endeavored to present the truths contained therein in a clear and impressive manner. Not seldom was it the case that his spirit was led so deeply into the truth that he himself was overcome by it, and became so overwhelmed by the power of God, that he stopped in the midst of his sermon to praise God with such power that all present were affected by it. Very often he preached with such victorious faith that many of his hearers—even scorers and persecutors—dropped to the floor like dead men, and when again restored, they called upon God for the forgiveness of their sins. The doctrine of entire sanctification he proclaimed with especial clearness and power, and has in this respect—as the fathers who heard him, declare—never been excelled in the Evangelical Association.

Miller's literary labors, from 1809 till 1815, were by no means insignificant; to the Evangelical Association they were of great value. His style was, of course, not ornate, but severely plain. Yet his writings were pithy, theologically correct, and adapted to actual wants, and hence also truly practical.

The first edition of the Discipline was, for him, a very great work, which often caused him to pray earnestly and perseveringly for wisdom from above, but he completed it, and it became a great blessing to the work, as we have seen on the foregoing pages.\* At the Conference in 1809 the brethren had no business rules, and became parliamtentarily entangled in their transactions, whereupon Miller compiled a set of rules for business, which proved so useful, that he says: "From this time on our Conferences became like unto the ante-chamber of heaven, in which all were benefited."

Several Conferences in succession requested Miller, "to write something useful for the Association." He prepared a brief biography of Albright, which was ordered printed by Conference in 1810. After this he wrote an excellent little practical volume, called: "Practical Christianity," which was ordered printed by Conference in 1812. Miller was also requested by this Conference to "compile an Episcopal Plan of Government," which involved a considerable enlargement of the Discipline, relative to Church government, henceforth he labored at this work. In the year 1813 he promised Conference "to finish the addition to our Discipline, if God would grant grace." The second edition of the Discipline (1817), was chiefly his work, and contains the "Episcopal Plan of Government," which he wrought out. He had, at that time, already begun the improvement and enlargement of the Discipline, and labored upon it until he was prostrated upon his death-bed. In 1815, after an attack of sickness, he resolved to write his autobiography, and completed it substantially, as we have it now, in "Albright and his Co-laborers." This also proved a great blessing.

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\*) See § 96, p. 101.

In consideration of these facts, it is evident that George Miller was the first literary author in the Evangelical Association, to a greater extent than has been generally known. "Honor to whom honor is due."

From an old document, which was added to his biography, we glean the following :

"Miller's great power of discernment, discretion, fearlessness, and his other abilities to build up the Church and spread the Gospel, cannot adequately be described. In faith, he was heroic, for his confidence in God's help was great. In the hottest persecution he did not let his courage sink, nor did he spare himself if suffering was at hand. When the heat of persecution was the greatest, he could infuse courage into his brethren. Neither allurements nor threatenings could move him from carrying out the Lord's commands. In the struggle against the enemies of the Kingdom of Christ, he constantly took the lead.

"He was very useful to his brethren in the Gospel, and was beloved and highly respected as a father among them. He conducted himself as a true shepherd towards the members of the Association, and led them in counsel and action. After Albright's early departure, these facts were especially realized.—To sincere Christians he was a precious gift of God, and he was received by them almost as an angel, but to luke-warm professors, he was a pungent salt, for he reproved their hypocrisy very sharply, hence he was hated by them as well as by the world. At 'big meetings' he was especially diligent to elucidate and inculcate the necessity of growth in grace and advancement in divine life, and to encourage believers to seek the sanctification of their souls. But his chief aim was *properly to instruct his ministerial brethren, since he well knew that the building up of the Church was dependent upon wholesome and pure doctrines. In this matter he was profoundly experienced, and also possessed of a special gift to speak and preach with a view to such indoctrination.*

"In the maintaining and execution of discipline he proved himself steadfast, and was no respecter of persons. Before his departure he had the pleasure of seeing the Evangelical Association advance and increase under the regulations which had been adopted; and that God awakened and qualified with His Spirit's power young men, to prosecute His work and extend its borders."\*

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\*) The *personal* description of George Miller, by those who knew him, is as follows: "He was nearly six feet high, and quite strongly built. His face was oblong, his forehead high and full, had dark eyes, quite a large nose, prominent cheek-bones, black hair, red eyebrows, rough skin and large hands. He shaved his whole face, wore coarse, home-made clothes, yet dressed in a neat and tidy manner. In his conversation he was considerate, and always spoke to the point, mostly in a gentle manner, but when he considered it necessary, also very decidedly and pungently."

### § 117. Why So Early?

This question has often been asked, "Why did Albright, Betz, Miller and others die so early, while in their best years, and when the work still needed them so much?" and some have answered: "The Lord has done it, He moves in mysterious ways." Yes, certainly, "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform," but any one who has some knowledge of the circumstances of the work at that time, the severe labors and hardships these men had to undergo, the many unavoidable transgressions of the laws of health they committed, and their "zeal for the house of God, which would almost eat them up," besides their severe treatment of themselves by fasting nearly every Friday, preaching daily in small, unventilated rooms, oftentimes for two-three hours, traveling in all sorts of extreme weather, and living in a constant tension, carrying the "burden of the Lord" concerning precious souls and the progress of the work on their hearts—will see ample cause for their early death, and may wonder that these self-sacrificing men did not all of them die an earlier death. While they as "burning and shining lights" showed the way of life to others, they were *themselves consumed*.

### § 118. Concluding Remarks to this Period.

A retrospective glance over this period reveals prominently several men, such as Albright, Walter, Miller, Dreisbach, Betz, Niebel, Erb and others, all American born Pennsylvania Germans, who were soundly converted to God, then divinely called to the Gospel ministry and thrust into the field which had been neglected, and had become a moral wilderness. They were wholly without academic training.—John Walter could not even read well when he began to preach; without libraries, excepting the Bible; but with Hymn-book, Catechism and Discipline, a few had, perhaps, Thomas A. Kempis' Imitation of Christ, Bunyan, Tersteegen, John Arndt, and those who read English had a few Methodist works—these men went forth. They also greatly lacked financial support, they had no rich congregations nor Church lands; almost without salary, frequently a scant thirty dollars per annum; they were clad in home-spun, oftentimes mended clothes, sometimes lacking the necessary food, and oftener still, a roof to sleep under. They often had to sleep under the canopy of heaven with the saddle for a pillow, or frequently, when in a primitive house or hut, rain made them uncomfortable, or the snow covered their beds during the night. Bad roads made their traveling difficult and dangerous; they had to swim across streams, incurring imminent danger of losing their lives. Their studio was on the saddle, and their studies were pursued on horseback—many read their books through while giving the reins to the trusty horse. Their prayer-closet was mostly in the woods, where they prayed and wept before the Lord, that He might bless their labors with con-

versions of sinners and the sanctification of believers. And God heard their prayers. For them there were not waiting soft pillows, fat stations, places of honor, or luxurious parsonages.

Although not scholarly homilists, they nearly always had their texts so well digested that they indeed "rightly divided the word," bringing to light the cardinal truths contained therein, and they preached to their frequently large congregations in such demonstration of the Holy Spirit and of power (sometimes for 2 or even 3 hours), that the hearts of sinners were pierced as with a sword, and many fell down as though shot, and began to cry out for mercy, whilst others asked with tears, what must we do to be saved? These men attacked sin of all shades and kinds; they did not spare in the least, "false religion" and "false worship," and overturned every edifice that was not built upon the rock Jesus Christ, ever pointing inquiring sinners to the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.

A persecution broke out against them, so indescribably bitter that it would have resulted in *martyrdom*, had not divine providence and civil law protected them. But this persecution had an effect like that of pouring oil upon fire, and victories followed in succession.

At the end of a Conference year, still holding high the banner of the cross, they could then triumphantly sing :

" At this sign of triumph  
Satan's host doth flee,  
On then, Christian Soldiers,  
On to victory :—  
Hell's foundations quiver  
At the shout of praise,  
Brothers, lift your voices;  
Loud your anthems raise."

Like "burning and shining lights," yea, like flaming torches, they traveled through eastern Pennsylvania, and blowing the Gospel trumpet, they chased away the night-birds of sin and the darkness of error, kindling the light of heavenly truth in many hearts and regions, which did then shine, despite all opposition, with blessed effect into the spiritually benighted and deteriorated Churches. But so far, these laborers could scarcely pay any attention to the upbuilding of a denomination; they were the pioneer-workers—the quarrymen, the foundation-diggers, carpenters, etc., who procured the raw material, and by organizing a Conference, adopting a *Discipline*, small hymn-book, etc., put up a temporary work-shop, but had not even progressed sufficiently to settle upon a *permanent name* for their Association. This period was, in the full sense of the word, the time of pioneering for this Association.

And who should not praise God for raising up such men? Although the work of our day is in many respects of a different and easier nature, who would not pray for a full measure of their spirit of prayer, zeal, Bible-study, manliness, heroism, and entire devotion to God? We honor their memory, and we will take as a pattern their devotion to soul-saving work, and their spirit of sacrifice for God's cause.

## THIRD PERIOD.

1816—1835.

LAYING A PERMANENT DENOMINATIONAL FOUNDATION  
AND CONTINUATION OF PIONEER WORK.

We shall presently see how the development of the course of events tended toward establishing a permanent foundation for this branch of the Church of Christ, and how those unassuming men of God, being led by the Holy Spirit, began to rear an ecclesiastical temple for the Lord.

## § 119. Important Conference Session.

The *ninth* Conference session was held in the house of Father Abraham Eyer, in Dry Valley, Union County, Pa., June 11–13, 1816. John Dreisbach was elected Chairman, and Henry Niebel appointed Secretary.

The following brethren were received, on probation, into the itinerancy: John Frueh, Philip Schmidt, Moses Dehoff, Adam Ettinger, John Schilling, Benjamin Ettinger, John Rickel, Frederick Kaltreiter, Andrew Wolf. The following were ordained Deacons: David Thomas, Michael Walter, John Dehoff, Solomon Miller; and elders: Frederick Schauer, Leonhart Zimmermann. Located, Abraham Buchman, Thomas Brewer, Henry Stauffer, on account of failing health.

The stationing resulted as follows:

Canaan District, John Dreisbach, P. E.; Franklin circuit, Jacob Brewer, Frederick Kaltreiter; York circuit, Leonhart Zimmerman, Adam Ettinger; Lancaster circuit, David Thomas; Schuylkill circuit, John Frueh, Benjamin Ettinger; Lake Mission, Jacob Kleinfelter.

Salem District, Henry Niebel, P. E.; Union circuit, John Kleinfelter, Moses Dehoff; Columbia circuit, Philip Schmidt; Center circuit, John Stambach; Bedford circuit, John Dehoff, John Schilling; Somerset circuit, Michael Walter, John Rickel; Canton Mission, Adam Hennig; Scioto Mission, Frederick Schauer.

The statistical report showed the number of members to be 1401, an increase of 293. Three new circuits or missions were established, and several of the old ones divided. The increase of preachers enabled the stationing committee to supply all the fields of labor with preachers, but alas! they did not all continue to the end of the year.

The following are some of the important transactions of this Conference :—

1. That the presiding elders shall visit the new missions during the year, namely in the States of Ohio and New York.
2. That the preacher's salary shall be 56 dollars, and reasonable traveling expenses, in case there is so much money on hand.
3. That the local preachers shall, after a trial of six years, and upon the recommendation of 12 itinerant ministers, be entitled to receive the ordination as deacons.
4. That John Dreisbach and Henry Niebel shall, during the Conference year get preacher's licenses printed, for the use of Conference.
5. That John Dreisbach and Henry Niebel shall make a suitable collection of hymns for the Association, and improve the present Discipline of the Church.
6. That the first General Conference of the Association shall take place in October next.

#### § 120. A Book Commission and General Conference Delegates.

John Dreisbach visiting the City of Philadelphia several times had bought the necessary materials for starting the printing business for the Church, and a small publishing house having been acquired in New Berlin, Pa., this Conference elected a *Book Commission* to superintend, in a manner, this business, and report concerning it to the Conference. This commission consisted of the following brethren : John Dreisbach, Henry Niebel, Solomon Miller, Adam Ettinger, Daniel Bertolet, Philip Breidenstein and Christopher Spangler.

The following brethren were elected as delegates to the first General Conference : John Dreisbach, Henry Niebel, John Walter, Leonhart Zimmermann, John Erb, John Stambach, John Kleinfelter, Solomon Miller, John Dehoff, David Thomas, Adam Ettinger and John Frueh—12. Thus it was that the first General Conference of the Evangelical Association was a *delegated* one.

#### § 121. A Very Important Conference Session.

This Conference made an epoch in the history of the Church, and was on the whole a very important and successful session. At that time the Annual Conference, it being the *original* Conference, could transact any necessary business, nor did the Discipline then place any restrictions upon it. Thus this original Conference was at the same time also the General Conference, or in other words, it embodied the General Conference in principle.\*

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\*) It also embodied the Quarterly Conference until a Presiding Elder was elected (1813), who then held Quarterly Conferences and Quarterly meetings, in the proper sense of the word.

But the work was enlarging, its wants increasing, and, whereas a number of young men were becoming members of the Annual Conference, the brethren felt that the time had arrived for holding a *General Conference*, to which they elected their older and experienced men, a body intended to transact the more important *legislative* and *general* business for the Church. This was an exceedingly wise arrangement, as subsequent history has abundantly shown.

### § 122. Enlargement of the Borders.

Although discipline was strictly enforced, among preachers and members, unconverted persons were not received, backsliders were expelled and many partially-enlightened people would not join these "strict and exclusive Albright-people," as the saying went, but rather adhered to those "Liberty-people," who at that time mainly opposed discipline—yet the borders were enlarged, especially on the new circuits or missions in Ohio and New York States.—On Lake Mission in the latter State many conversions took place and several new classes were formed, so that the mission numbered 42 members at the close of the Conference year. The presiding elder, John Dreisbach, visited the work during the year and labored with blessed success. On Christmas a meeting was held at Father Jacob Riegel's, which was richly blessed. The chief place was Fayette, Seneca county, and from there the work spread until a presiding elder district could be formed. Several times before it had seemed as though this work would come to naught, but finally it obtained a solid footing. That faithful local preacher, Christian Wolf, did excellent service and was, during a number of years, the main pillar of the work. After Dreisbach had visited this mission field he continued his journey into Canada, where he preached at Jacob Miller's, 6 miles beyond Niagara Falls, and also at the homes of his relatives, Jacob Buck and John Buck, near Burlington. On the American side he also preached in the vicinity of Jacob Schopp and P. Bluecher, near Buffalo, and also at Chr. Thomas'. But the Germans were not very numerous in those parts at that time.

### § 123. The Beginning in Ohio.

The above-mentioned Conference established two new circuits, or missions—as they would now be called—in Ohio, namely, Scioto Mission and Canton Mission. Frederick Schauer was stationed on Scioto, but he proved unfaithful to the Church and joined another denomination during the year. Adam Hennig was sent to Canton Mission and had great success. Although the country was mostly new, and the settlers lived in log-cabins, poorly arranged for entertaining itinerants, Bro. Hennig found many open doors and, in a short time, formed a circuit of 32 appointments. In a letter written to Rev. William W. Orwig, in later years, he says: "When I arrived at my new field of labor, four miles west of New Philadelphia, I met with a fam-

ily of our dear friends, that had just arrived the day before; oh, how they rejoiced that their preachers had followed them to that wilderness. They immediately made arrangements for preaching at a neighbor's house, and that evening I had a log-house full of hearers from various denominations, who were greatly pleased to have German preaching, and requested me to continue it. My text was 1 Peter 4. 8, and the word seemed to be well received." The country (or forest) was but sparsely settled, many Germans had but recently entered the dense, aboriginal forest, and had neither stable nor feed for the itinerant's horse, so Bro. Hennig attached a bell to his faithful creature and turned him loose in the woods to help himself as best he could. By the sound of the bell Bro. Hennig could find the horse again in the morning. "The roads," he continues, "were in some places very bad. I frequently met with dangerous swamps and deep, bridge-less rivers, across which I had to swim my horse at the risk of life. Some of the inhabitants were as rough and wild as the country—yet I also met with such as had a disposition to hear the Gospel preached in the German language."

A large portion of this new circuit was situated in Stark county, about the town of Canton, hence it was called Canton Circuit, but it extended also over the counties Tuscarawas, Wayne and Richland, and was about 400 miles in circumference. Bro. Hennig often preached two or three times a day, and completed his round on this large circuit in about 4 weeks. But as soon as sinners became awakened and converted to God, opposition and persecution arose. The work was decried as being fanaticism, and the people were warned against deception.

Toward the Fall of the year (1816) the presiding elder, Henry Niebel, visited this field of labor and brought with him an assistant, John Schilling. These two brethren labored during the Winter with great success, formed several classes, and brought a favorable report of the new field to the next Conference. Already the membership amounted to 55.

#### § 124. Emigration to Ohio.—Divine Punishment.

About this time there was a strong emigration from eastern Pennsylvania into Ohio, which was then the famous "West." Quite a number of Evangelical members removed along with this emigration, and settled on the rich soil in the grand forests of Ohio. After the Evangelical preachers had begun their labors and revivals took place, there was such favorable progress that a presiding elder district could be formed. In later years it became the "Western Conference."

Among the first families who received the itinerant preachers and united with the Church in Ohio, were the following: M. Reidinger, P. Strayer, A. Schilling, P. Oberlin, A. Rausch, C. Dillmann, D. Williams, P. Stroh, J. Schwartz, D. Hennig—some of whom had been members before they emigrated.

A remarkable instance of the primitive justice of God took place during the year, near the village of Dover, York County, Pennsylvania. The friends there had for a considerable time been disturbed in their religious services, and grossly insulted with slanders and calumnies by a gang of sons of Belial, headed by a certain ruffian named Sharp. Once, when the brethren were engaged in worship, this gang went so far in their impiety as to hold a mock communion service, with sweet cakes and whiskey, close by in the street. On their knees they received the cakes and whiskey from the hand of Sharp, blasphemously repeating the words of the institution.—Shortly afterward a horse-race took place in the neighborhood at which this Sharp was one of the riders—he fell from his horse and died in a few minutes. “Be not deceived, God is not mocked.” After this occurrence the disturbances of worship subsided somewhat in that vicinity.

#### § 125. The First General Conference.

This General Conference was, as we have seen, appointed by the last session of the Original Conference, which possessed the undoubted right to call such a Conference, as it had the entire work under its exclusive control. The 12 delegates who had been elected to constitute the General Conference, met at the house of Martin Dreisbach, in Buffalo Valley, Union County, Pennsylvania, and were in session October 14th to 17th, 1816. Rev. Wm. W. Orwig wrote of it as follows :

“To promote the interests of the printing and book establishment, started by the brethren, and to deliberate on a union of the ‘Evangelical Association’ and the ‘United Brethren in Christ’ into one Church, seem to have been the main objects of this conference. Several of the brethren and members of both denominations were greatly in favor of this union, especially John Dreisbach, on the part of the Evangelical Association, and Father Christian Newcomer, on the part of the ‘United Brethren’; which brethren had, on former occasions, already consulted on this measure, and were the leaders of the movement. Bro. Dreisbach assures us, that their motives were perfectly pure, considering, as they did, that such a union would be highly advantageous to the prosecution of the work of God among the Germans of this country.

“Pursuant to the resolution passed by the last conference, the chosen delegates met at the above mentioned time and place, together with Bishop Newcomer, and some other ministers of the ‘United Brethren.’ Conference being opened with prayer for the blessing of the Most High, the regular organization took place, by electing John Dreisbach chairman and Henry Niebel secretary.

“The first item claiming the attention of conference, was the appointment of a General Book Agent and an Assistant. Although the printing establishment was then but a small matter, yet a beginning having been

made, some one had to attend to it. Bro. Solomon Miller was, accordingly, elected General Agent, and Henry Niebel Assistant. — The next topic was the proposed union. What was said in favor and against it, is not recorded in the minutes; but there is reason to believe, that the two sides of the question were duly considered. Bishop Newcomer and the ministers of the 'United Brethren,' who had come with him, took an active part in the discussions, and both parties agreed on making an attempt at said union. Hereupon a conference was appointed, to consist of ministers of both denominations, to be called '*Social Conference*.' On our part, the following brethren were chosen delegates to said conference: John Dreisbach, Henry Niebel, Solomon Miller, John Kleinfelter, David Thomas and Adam Ettinger. This Social Conference was to meet February 14, 1817.

"The German hymn-book (*Das Geistliche Saitenspiel*), compiled by John Dreisbach and Henry Niebel, was approved, and 1500 copies were ordered to be printed. This was the first hymnbook of the Evangelical Association, and was very favorably received by the membership at large. The '*Articles of Faith and Discipline*,' better arranged and improved by the same brethren, was likewise approved by General Conference. Its publication was however deferred, on account of the proposed union; but in case of its failure, 1500 copies of the Discipline were also forthwith to be printed. — The annual salary of an itinerant, fixed by last conference at \$56, besides traveling expenses, was raised to \$60."

#### § 126. The Name "Evangelical Association" Adopted.

This General Conference dropped the borrowed name, "The so-called Albright People," and adopted a permanent one, "*The Evangelical Association*." It was timely and proper that the Conference thus changed the designation of the Church. The name "Albright People" had its origin with ungodly persecutors of the brethren, who connected with Albright's name all the cruel falsehoods and slanders, whereby they stigmatized this good man.—And on Scriptural principles no Christian denomination ought to bear the name of any *human being*, even if it were the name of an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the teachings of the apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 2.).

We may be thankful that the Evangelical fathers selected such an appropriate name as "The Evangelical Association," and this came about in a very simple, natural manner.—It was customary from the beginning of the organization, among the preachers and members, to call themselves: "this Association," or "our Association" (*Gemeinschaft*). Thus we find the words "*Unsere Gemeinschaft*" on the first license issued by the Conference in 1807. We also find in the Original Conference book on page 2, the following designation: "*Diese Vereinigte Evangelische Gemeinschaft*," (This United Evangelical Association), evidently in imitation of Rev. John

Wesley, who at first called the Methodists "The United Societies." But although the word "*Gemeinschaft*" was always used in common conversation, and hence unofficially, it was now adopted and authorized by the General Conference. It remained to find a proper adjective to qualify the name and thus make the Church known by a qualifying appellation. A better word for this purpose could not be found than the word "*Evangelical*", for this contains nothing sectarian, nothing that is merely human, yet nothing that is exclusive or arrogant. The Holy Spirit, who was with these plain servants of the Lord, guided them also in this matter into the way of truth.

### § 127. The Second Edition of the Discipline.

The second edition of the Discipline, which was ordered to be printed by this Conference, was an important step in the right direction. George Miller had worked upon it for several years, and the brethren Dreisbach and Niebel had completed the work, in accordance with the direction of the last Annual Conference, under the influence of the divine blessing.

Some of Bro. Dreisbach's personal memoranda about this work are remarkable enough to be inserted.

The following is a specimen:—

"Monday, the 17th of June, I arrived at home, and Bro. Niebel and I labored this week upon our Discipline, to arrange and prepare it for the press, and God gave us great grace in this work and blessed us."

On this subject we quote further from *Albright and his Co-laborers*:

"1. How very remarkable it is that Miller, through his inability to serve a charge, from 1809, was led to 'write' the Discipline and other necessary works, and that he was not only the author of the first edition of the Discipline, but substantially also the compiler of the second.

2. That Miller prayed earnestly for light and strength in preparing the Discipline, that Satan attacked him with severe temptations during the time he was engaged in this work, and that the little volume was so signally crowned with divine favor—these are significant facts.

3. That Dreisbach and Niebel were so richly blessed, while laboring in the preparation of the second edition for the press. This also is remarkable.

"The Discipline of the Evangelical Association is not a mere human product. Under the providence of God it was designed to fill a felt want, and was written by men of earnest prayer, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, as the blessed results of this book abundantly prove. The Holy Scriptures, of course, are only inspired, yet this book of Discipline is also worthy of the highest esteem and cheerful obedience, as it is based on the Word of God. Hence the earnest questions put to every applicant for the ministry: 'Are you acquainted with the Articles of Faith and Discipline of our Church?' 'Will you obey and defend them?' Acquaintance

with our Discipline, and a promise to obey and defend it, are thus made the conditions of entrance into the ministry. Were the Discipline a mere human work, such conditions could not by any means be made.

"There was a time when not only the ministers constantly carried the Discipline with them, but many members also had it in their pockets, together with the New Testament. This 'rule book,' as it was often called, was highly prized and much studied. We will not say how it is in this respect at the present day." \*

This edition was issued in 1817, under the following title: "*Articles of Faith and Discipline of the Evangelical Association, besides the Object of their Union with God and with one another.*"—The book contains 144 pages, has proper divisions into chapters and sections, and is, excepting some changes and additions, substantially the Discipline we now have.

### § 128. The First Official Hymn-book, and Close of the Session.

The hymn-book which John Walter had published in 1810 contained only 56 hymns and had become too small and inadequate for the wants of the Church. Although Conference had instructed or rather permitted Bro. Walter to print it, it could not be considered official, in the full sense of the word, because Conference had not authorized him to make such a collection of hymns. But the Annual Conference of 1816 appointed the brethren Dreisbach and Niebel to prepare a larger collection of suitable spiritual hymns for the use of the Church, and they laid the result of their labors before the General Conference, which accepted it and ordered the book printed under the poetic title: "*Das Geistliche Saitenspiel*," which may be translated: *The Spiritual Psalter*. This hymn-book was for those times an excellent one, served the Church for many years, and proved to be a means of edification and blessing. Thus we have seen that the first General Conference of our Church transacted a vast amount of practical and excellent business.

The General Conference closed its session in the same solemn manner as did the original Annual Conference, thus adopting the same rule that was introduced in 1810 by the Annual Conference, and was also inserted into the second edition of the Discipline. Its close is recorded as follows:

"Our Conference was closed in the name of God, with united approval of the above mentioned transactions, and in token of our willingness, and that we have obligated ourselves to obey God and our Discipline in accordance with the Word of God, we sign our names as in the presence of God and close with prayer, in faith and confidence in God, who has thus united us in peace and love, and has worked in us to will that he will also give us the power to do according to his good pleasure through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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\*) Albright and his Co-laborers, pp. 271-272.

"John Dreisbach, Henry Niebel, John Erb, John Stambach, John Kleinfelter, Solomon Miller, David Thomas, John Dehoff, John Frueh, Adam Ettinger."

### § 129. The Social Conference.

Concerning the so-called "Social Conference" which had been appointed we have the following report :

"At the appointed time, the delegates of the Social Conference met at *Henry Kumler's*, in Canogechigg, Washington Co., Maryland, near Hagerstown,\* but the delegation of the 'United Brethren' not being properly authorized, as soon appeared, to act finally, their General Conference having reserved to itself the right of final action on the resolutions of the 'Social Conference,' contrary to their previous understanding: our delegation was greatly disappointed in their expectations. The delegation of the 'United Brethren' consisted of the following individuals: Bishop C. Newcomer, Joseph Hoffmann, Jacob Baulus, Abraham Meyer, Christian Berger and Conrad Roth.—Although this delegation was not constitutional, yet these brethren insisted on a union; and the delegates of the Evangelical Association would readily have agreed to it, if it could have been done in a proper manner for the promotion of the cause of God.—But there were still other impediments in the way: the plan of a regular itinerancy had not yet been generally recognized and approved by the United Brethren. Some of their members and even ministers had opposed it; neither had they a printed Discipline, and its introduction was yet doubtful, as they held opposite views on the subject.† Even one of the delegates expressed himself more against than for a Discipline. 'Notwithstanding this,' says Mr. Dreisbach in his report on this Social Conference, 'they insisted on our uniting with them, in spite of all these difficulties. But we said, 'No,' for we considered it unreasonable under these circumstances, and consequently could not agree to it. Thus ended this Social Conference, without having accomplished its object. Yet,' continues Mr. Dreisbach, 'we

\* It has since been claimed that this Conference was not held where Rev. W. W. Orwig claims it to have been held, but that Henry Kumler lived about one mile north of Mason & Dixon's line, in Franklin County, Pa.

† In the above quotation it is said that the United Brethren did not yet have a printed Discipline. This assertion, made by Rev. W. W. Orwig, evidently upon the ground of Rev John Dreisbach's report, the author of the *German History of the United Brethren Church* positively denies. Upon investigation we find that the General Conference of the United Brethren Church in 1815, adopted a brief confession of faith (creed) and a few Church regulations, which afterwards appeared in print—in a little book of 55 pages—but whether it was already published when this "Social Conference" was in session, we could not ascertain, as we have no data at hand. That not a few among the "Brethren" were, at that time and afterward, opposed to Church Discipline, scarcely any one will undertake to deny.

prayed with and for each other, preached and exhorted alternately, bade each other Godspeed in our operations, and pledged ourselves to treat one another as Christians and children of God.'

"Mr. Dreisbach, in conclusion on this subject, says: 'The failure of this attempt to bring about a union of these two denominations, displeased many members of both parties; yet, I believe, it grieved none so much, as it did Father Newcomer and myself.'

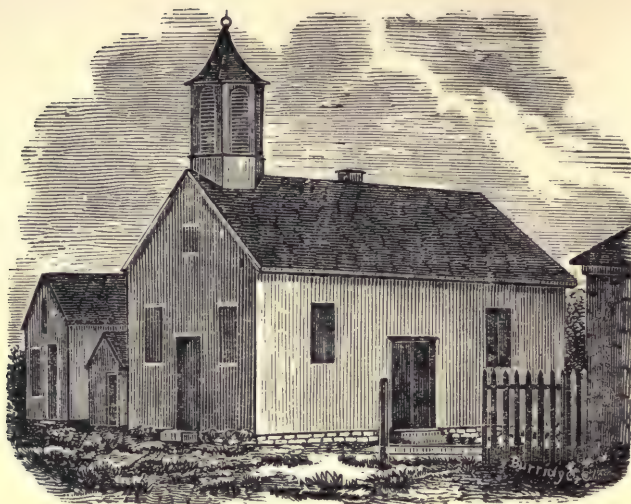
"The good intentions of the projectors of this union, no one will be disposed to call into question: both parties expected to profit by it, and to promote their Master's cause.—As both denominations were yet feeble, and small in point of number, and the opposition and persecution by the world and nominal Christians were great, their union would have given them more respectability and influence, and also lessened the burdens. But how the brethren could hope that such an enterprise would succeed, can be accounted for only by the fact that they were conscious of their upright intentions, and had overrated each other's disinterestedness. After the discussion was over, they saw very plainly, that under the existing circumstances the contemplated union was impossible."

The *branching out* of organized religious societies into two or more parties is indeed no rare occurrence in the Church universal, and sometimes cannot be prevented. But to merge organically two denominations, arising separately and organized independently, whose denominational activity and spirit has been strongly developed, or weld them into one, as it were, has seldom been accomplished with success. However, when doctrine Church government, purpose and effort, are essentially one, and the Spirit of Christ governs them—why not? Does not that Spirit still cause the "multitude of them that believe to be of one heart and of one soul?" (Acts 4, 32). And if hearts are one, why not also heads and hands?—But alas, this oneness in Christ is so often lacking, and the "carnal" mixes itself frequently into the denominational (1 Cor. 3. 1-4). Yet the prayer of Christ must be fulfilled: "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, *that the world may believe that thou hast sent me*" (John 17. 20).

This unity will result in *that* demonstration which convinces the world of the divinity as well as the humanity, and of the divine mission of Christ. Lord hasten that day. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

### § 130. The First Meeting-house of the Evangelical Association.

During this year the aforementioned publishing house and book bindery was established, and the first meeting-house or church edifice erected, both on the same lot, in New Berlin, Union County, Pa., the church at the northern, and the publishing house at the southern end of the lot. An engraving of both is here inserted.



The church was a log, frame building, 34x38 feet. The pulpit was, like the pulpits of the old churches in this country, high, rounded in front, and very inconvenient. The inside of the house was years afterward remodeled, furnished with a new pulpit, small steeple and a bell. It was dedicated on March 2d, 1817, Bro. Dreisbach preaching the dedicatory sermon from Psalm 27. 4. It was a precious season, and both ministers and members felt as did Jacob when the Lord revealed himself unto him on his journey, "that this was none other but the house of God and the gate of heaven." In that house the truth of God's word achieved many victories in awakening and converting sinners and advancing the children of God in their spiritual life. Several great revivals took place in it, although the membership never was very numerous.

The publishing house was a frame structure 20x26, and one story and a half high. It was used for about twelve years for said purpose, but as the Association was yet too young and feeble to sustain such an establishment, it failed.—The brethren sold the printing materials, and from that time on their printing and binding was done by *George Miller*, who from the beginning had been their printer and binder, till the second publishing house was erected. The establishment had become considerably involved, and the business was weak, so that it required a number of years till the debts were paid, and when, in 1837, the second house was established, there were barely a few hundred dollars in the treasury, and no dividend had ever been made to the Conferences. The old printing office was afterward used for various purposes, then adapted and used for Sunday-school purposes, and finally sold to the school-director of the borough.

Until now the brethren had preached exclusively in private houses, etc., which were in many cases but small log-buildings. The chief concern was to lead the people to sound repentance and conversion to God, while external improvements and conveniences remained far in the background. In one respect, however, the Evangelical Association was at that time ahead of all the German Protestant Churches, namely in the publication business. Of course the beginning was weak, and yet at the time when the membership was not much over one thousand, the Discipline, the Hymn-book, the Catechism, "Practical Christianity," Pamphlets, etc., were published. That sales were small and the book business had to contend with difficulties is easily explained by the facts that the membership was yet small, and that about this time such a severe financial crisis came upon the country, as perhaps never occurred before. This crisis was caused by the general reaction consequent upon the close of the war with England, and of the Napoleonic wars in Europe—about A. D. 1815. About two years later the price of wheat had fallen from \$3.00 to 40 cents per bushel, and all market products in about the same proportion. The vast majority of members were farmers, upon whom the crisis was most severe. The effects of this "panic" lasted over *ten years*, and exerted in some respects an unfavorable influence upon the work. But the old Evangelical fathers were economical managers and succeeded finally, with divine help, in bringing their little financial craft through the stormy waters without sinking into bankruptcy.

### § 131. Strict Application of the Discipline at the Tenth Conference.

The *tenth* annual Conference was held from June 2d till 7th, 1817, in New Berlin, Pa., in the new church. Henry Niebel was elected chairman and John Kleinfelter appointed secretary. One itinerant and one local preacher were expelled from the Church as transgressors, and three deposed from office on account of neglect of duty. David Thomas, Adam Hennig and Philip Schmidt located. Jacob Barber, Adam Kleinfelter, Samuel Muck, Henry Wieand, and Benjamin Boeshor were received on probation. James Brewer and Adam Ettinger were ordained deacons, and John Kleinfelter, Jacob Kleinfelter and John Stambach elders.

Itinerants now numbered 21, members 1493, an increase during the past Conference year of only 92.

We see above that discipline was not only applied to members, but with equal strictness to preachers.

Conference elected a number of agents, to whom books were to be sent, of whom the preachers could then obtain them for the supply of their fields of labor; these agents were called "Book-Commission-men," and were responsible to the Chief book-steward, and the preachers to those agents for books received.

The preachers were stationed as follows:

Canaan District: John Dreisbach, P. E.; Franklin circuit, Michael

Walter ; Berkley circuit, James Brewer ; York circuit, Jacob Kleinfelter and Benjamin Boeshor ; Lancaster circuit, Adam Ettinger and Jacob Barber ; Schuylkill circuit, John Frueh and Samuel Muck ; Lake circuit, John Schilling.

Salem District : Henry Niebel, P. E. ; Columbia circuit, Leonhart Zimmermann ; Union circuit, Benjamin Ettinger and Frederick Kaltreiter ; Center circuit, Moses Dehoff ; Bedford circuit, John Rickel ; Somerset circuit, John Stambach and John Dehoff ; Center circuit, Leonhart Zimmermann and John Peters ; Bedford circuit, John Rickel ; Somerset circuit, Jacob Barber and Samuel Witt ; Canton circuit, Michael Walter ; Lancaster, (Ohio) circuit, Benjamin Ettinger and Samuel Muck.

### §132. Struggles and Victories.

Although one of the missions in the State of Ohio proved a failure, Conference sent two preachers thither and called that field the Lancaster (Ohio) circuit. The brethren had good success and at the next Conference reported 55 new members. Canton circuit gained 10 and Lake circuit 17 members. Several of the old circuits increased considerably, and on the whole about 400 new members were received during the past Conference year—and yet the net increase was but little over 200. Bro. Orwig says that persecution was especially severe about this time. Thus many of the new converts were intimidated. The preachers were, with few exceptions, diligent and faithful. The enemies of the work had now given up all hope of crushing it, but they endeavored to hinder it in all possible ways—but in vain. “The desire of the wicked shall perish.” (Ps. 112, 10.)

John Dreisbach speaks of a very successful camp-meeting held soon after conference on the land of John Adam Hennig at the lower end of Penn's Valley, Pa. This was, as it appears, the first German camp-meeting held in this and the adjoining Brush Valley, which in later times became famous for camp-meetings. “Never,” says Bro. Dreisbach, “did I hear the brethren preach more instructive and energetic sermons than at this camp-meeting. Sinners were awakened and converted and the children of God greatly edified and advanced in the work of God.”

### § 133. Eleventh Conference—Higher Salaries—Progress.

The *eleventh* Conference was also held at New Berlin, June 1–5, 1818. John Dreisbach was elected chairman and Henry Niebel was appointed secretary. John Frueh, Adam Ettinger, Henry Wieand and James Brewer located. Henry Hassler, John Breidenstein, Samuel Witt and John Peters were received on probation. John Dreisbach and Henry Niebel were re-elected as presiding elders and changed on the districts. The stationing resulted as follows :

Canaan district, Henry Niebel, P. E.; Schuylkill circuit, Moses Dehoff and Adam Kleinfelter; Lancaster circuit, John Schilling and Benjamin Boeshor; York circuit, John Kleinfelter and John Breidenstein; Franklin circuit, Henry Hassler; Berkley circuit, Jacob Kleinfelter; Lake circuit, Frederick Kaltreiter.

Salem district, John Dreisbach, P. E.; Union circuit, John Stambach and John Dehoff; Center circuit, Leonhart Zimmermann and John Peters; Bedford circuit, John Rickel; Somerset circuit, Jacob Barber and Samuel Witt; Canton circuit, Michael Walter; Lancaster (Ohio) circuit Benjamin Ettinger and Samuel Muck.

At this Conference the number of itinerant preachers was 21. The number of members 1707—increase 214. The salary of preachers was \$59.03½. Never before had the salary been so high, but from this time on it again decreased, as the financial crisis became very oppressive. But the little company of itinerants, a few excepted, manifested great heroism in facing not only fiery persecution and trials, but also poverty and hardships. Had it not been for their families and shattered health, probably all would have remained in the field.

#### § 134. Against Conformity to the World.

The past Conference year had not been quite so prosperous as before, yet some circuits increased considerably. However, Lake circuit suffered damage on account of the unfaithfulness of the preacher.

This kind of preachers caused the Society a great deal of trouble in those days; almost every year some of them, both *itinerant* and *local* preachers, were deposed from the ministry, on account of immoral conduct, and others were expelled. This was evidently owing to the fact, that in those early days of the Society, men were frequently received into the ministry, who lacked the necessary experience and moral firmness. It is pleasing, however, to perceive that under these circumstances the Discipline of the Church was faithfully executed. As soon as a minister proved himself unworthy of his sacred office, he was called to an account and censured, or deposed from the ministry, or even expelled, according to the nature of his offence.

In order fully to show the anxiety of the brethren of those times, to prevent the spread of every evil, and of every thing that was in their view conformity to the world, and also their attitude toward the Methodist Episcopal Church, with regard to receiving their members into the Society; we give below some resolutions of the last Conference, as being also a part of the history of the denomination. These resolutions are:—

1. "That every preacher be forbidden to wear gloves *during summer*, or to use any of the following articles at any time of the year, viz., silver-plated stirrups and bridle-bits, loaded whips, and large watch-keys."

2. "That it shall be considered a transgression for any one of our ministers to receive members of the Methodist Episcopal Church into our connection, without the consent of the preacher having charge over them ; except in cases where they move from the bounds of their Church into those of the Association, or have been regularly dismissed by their Church."

From these resolutions it appears, that the things forbidden therein either threatened to become fashionable, or had become so already ; and that the brethren looked upon them as foreboding harm. Although the articles mentioned in the first resolution, may appear trivial to some, and any ecclesiastical enactment with regard to them, as being weak and even fanatical, yet such an enactment, provided it is not abused by excess, can easily be reconciled with the conduct of the apostles themselves. Peter and Paul did not deem it beneath their dignity to warn the faithful against wearing luxurious apparel, gold and pearls, plaiting the hair, etc. Yet in reference to this, we must be guarded against both extremes, and great care is necessary, lest we judge others harshly on account of their different dress ; a practice which among Christians, and especially among members of the same denomination, is productive of more injury than the evil itself against which it is directed.

Resolutions against the use of tobacco and strong drink, then so universally in vogue, both among professors of religion and others, we do not find in the protocol of the Conferences of those days. This was, in all probability, owing to the fact, that the so-called *moderate use* of these articles, was not then considered an evil. In later times, the Society protested against both these evils, and the ministers and members were unqualifiedly forbidden to use strong drinks as a beverage.

In reference to the last quoted resolution of this Conference, we would merely say that it would have been desirable, if the principle it embodies had been mutually regarded. Many a temptation, annoyance, and ill feeling would thus have been prevented, and the cause of the Lord much better served.—It is still worthy of being recommended to the consideration of both Churches.

### § 135. Happy Death of John Walter.

A very great vacancy occurred this year in the ministry and the Church by the decease of the very successful and faithful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ—JOHN WALTER.

When Bro. Walter was awakened and converted under the labors of Jacob Albright, he was yet young, probably in his 19th year. A few years afterward he went forth as an itinerant preacher under the direction of Albright, in which calling he labored faithfully until A. D. 1813, when he was compelled on account of impaired health, to locate. He served the Church nearly 12 years in the itinerancy and distinguished himself

everywhere by piety and humility. He was universally beloved and esteemed.

In his preaching he generally exerted himself strenuously and frequently would preach from two to three hours with the greatest enthusiasm. In consequence of this exertion he was hoarse much of the time, especially toward the close of his ministry, and suffered much on account of it.\*

His last circuit was the so-called Schuylkill and Lancaster circuit, which the Conference of 1813 assigned to him and two other brethren. In this year he began to spit blood, but did not leave his field of labor till he began to bleed freely from his throat and lungs and became very sick. From this time on he was unable to serve as an itinerant. Notwithstanding his weakness, however, he frequently attended general and camp-meetings, and his preaching was blessed. Sometimes he was confined to his bed and then at times he could walk about, yet too weak to do much. When he was first taken sick he lived in a place called "Swamp," in West Cocalico Township, Lancaster County, Pa., where he owned a house and a few acres of land. Subsequently he sold his property, and bought another house and a parcel of land in Hanover Township, Lebanon County, Pa., near the home of his relatives. He was poor and unable to support himself, and therefore sometimes received the kind assistance of his neighbors and friends. Three weeks before his death he became confined to his bed, but enjoyed great peace and tranquility of mind. He had borne his five years' sickness with great patience and submission to the will of God, always enjoying a firm hope of everlasting glory; and now in his last attack he joyfully exclaimed, "*I know that my Redeemer liveth!*" and exhorted his wife and relatives not to mourn for him, assuring them that he was passing from all suffering into everlasting bliss. In this full hope of eternal life he departed on the 3rd of December, 1818. As he was born on the 21st of August, 1781, his career was finished at 37 years, 3 months and 6 days. His remains were buried near his house, and Bro. David Thomas preached an affecting funeral sermon from Hebrews 13, 17, to a large audience.

Rev. JOHN BREIDENSTEIN, who was well acquainted with the sainted Bro. Walter, speaks of him as follows: "His labors among his brethren were calculated to lead them into a higher state of grace. He exhorted them to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and insisted

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\*) As an instance of his great zeal in preaching the following has been related: When in 1812 he traveled Franklin circuit, he frequently preached at the house of JOSEPH WENGERT, and often, after services were over, Mrs. Wengert dried *his clothes* which had become saturated with perspiration during the meeting! Sometimes, like Paul, he preached till toward midnight. Like many of his co-laborers, he did not stop until he had the "victory." He was a man of small stature, somewhat below medium size, physically well-built, and quite muscular, but although he was "tough and wiry," such over-exertions, however well-intended, were too much for his constitution.

that Christians should follow after holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord. He urged that there were immeasurable heights and unfathomable depths in the love of Christ attainable by believing. All his efforts were put forth to lead sinners to Christ, and to persuade Christians to walk in the Spirit, and to attain unto the highest degree of grace attainable in this life. On certain occasions he made special efforts to urge Christians to seek holiness through the prayer of faith, and thus to consecrate themselves unreservedly to the Lord. According to his view, holiness consisted in being delivered from all evil affections and desires, and in being conformed to the will of God, so that God is glorified in our bodies and spirits.—The vacancy caused by the departure of Walter could hardly be filled by another minister of the Evangelical Association.”\*

By many testimonies it has been established that God had blessed him with an extraordinary gift of preaching, of which he made abundant and blessed use, accompanied by much prayer, study of the Scriptures, and a godly life. He would preach with great clearness and power on repentance, faith, conversion, sanctification, godliness, judgment, heaven, hell, and all the leading doctrines of the Bible. His sermons were intense and penetrating, so that his audiences were oftentimes overwhelmed and transported by divine power into the light of the truths which flowed from his lips, clothed with many passages of Scripture, in a stream of natural unaffected eloquence, set on fire by the Holy Spirit, and sinners and saints beheld their spiritual condition as if reflected by a divine mirror. Of his gift for poetry we have spoken elsewhere. All in all the Evangelical Association has never, since he finished his career, looked upon his like again. “And they glorified God in him.”

### § 136. Stagnation of the Work Begins. Twelfth Conference.

The *twelfth* session of the Conference was also held in New Berlin, Pa., from June 7th to 11th, 1819. John Dreisbach was elected chairman and Henry Niebel appointed secretary. Two itinerant and one local preacher were expelled from the Association on account of transgressions, and Henry Niebel and John Rickel located. David Wolf, Jacob Peters and Jacob Baumgartner were received on trial into the itinerancy—the former two had traveled for sometime the previous year. John Frueh and Jacob Frey re-entered the itinerancy. As Bro. Niebel located and no new presiding elder was elected, Bro. Dreisbach had the supervision of both districts during the coming Conference year, which proved, however, too severe a task for him.

The preachers were stationed as follows :

Both districts, John Dreisbach, P. E.; Schuylkill circuit, John Schilling and Jacob Baumgartner; Lancaster circuit, Leonhart Zimmermann and

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\*) Albright and his Co-laborers, p. 156.

Samuel Muck ; York circuit, Michael Walter and Moses Dehoff ; Franklin circuit, John Frueh ; Berkley circuit, Benjamin Ettinger ; Lake circuit, John Kleinfelter ; Union circuit, Henry Hassler and John Breidenstein ; Center circuit, John Stambach and Jacob Peters ; Bedford circuit, Samuel Witt ; Somerset circuit, Adam Kleinfelter and John Peters ; Canton circuit, Jacob Kleinfelter and J. Frey ; Lancaster (Ohio) circuit, Jacob Barber and David Wolf.

In order to present the numerical strength of the different fields of labor more clearly, we insert here the statistics of members, as contained in the Conference record.

In Pennsylvania : Union circuit 239, Center circuit 304, Lancaster circuit 277, York circuit 194, Somerset circuit 204, Franklin circuit (partly in Maryland) 93, Schuylkill circuit 93, Bedford circuit 43.

In Ohio : Canton circuit 139, Lancaster (Ohio) circuit 90.

In Virginia : Berkley circuit 160. Altogether 1895 ; increase last Conference year, 188.

The work was, with the exception of the circuit in Virginia, almost exclusively German, although English preaching was expected in some places. John Dreisbach, James Brewer and Adam Ettinger also preached in the English language when it was desired. The brethren believed that the chief calling of the Evangelical Association was to labor among the Germans, because the Methodist Church labored among the English, and the United Brethren in Christ also took rapid steps in that direction. There was no other body in the field to lead the neglected Germans to Christ, and they had not forgotten that Albright's call had direct reference to the Germans.

Rev. William W. Orwig expresses his views of the work at this time as follows :

" It appears that, although Conference lost four of its itinerant members by expulsion and location, yet the circuits were all supplied, but had only one presiding elder, whose health began to fail at this time, for which reason he could not visit the circuits in Ohio and New York at all, and the rest but irregularly. This was very detrimental, preventing the spread and increase of the good work, and several of the circuits lost considerably in point of numbers, especially Union, Center and Canton ; and some scarcely retained their number. This was, consequently, the beginning of a time of sore trials for the Society. Yet it appears, that the brethren did not lose their courage, but prosecuted their labors in humble reliance on help from on High, and in some places were crowned with good success. Somerset circuit had an increase of 50 members, and old Schuylkill circuit began to stir, as if it were already feeling within itself the great reformation which was so near at hand. Thus the brethren were not without hope and comfort, although some dark clouds were spreading over their horizon.

"The financial matters of the Conference were as yet very deficient, besides being connected with many difficulties. The subsidiary contributions, which have already been mentioned, were hitherto retained in the hands of the trustees, until they were drawn by the ministers by an order from Conference. This gave rise to serious difficulties in settling with the ministers at Conference, and hence the last session supplied the superintending preachers with written orders on the trustees, to send in such contributions, in case they could not attend Conference in person. This custom being continued in future, contributed much to remove the former difficulties in settling with the ministers." \*

### § 137. Departure of Solomon Miller.

During this Conference year—the date not ascertained—SOLOMON MILLER died. He was a brother of the sainted George Miller, and was converted about the same time as his brother. He took an active part in the "Council" of 1803, became a local preacher and was a member of the Original Conference in 1807, and also of the first General Conference in 1816. As he lived in New Berlin, Pa., which place was for many years, in many respects, the "headquarters" of the Church, he took great interest in the work and also served since the opening of the publishing business as chief manager or steward, to which position General Conference had elected him in 1816. He was one of the "pillars" of the Church, one of the solid, grand men who helped to fight the initiatory battles of the Evangelical Association, and proved himself a faithful servant in the work of God unto the end of his useful life.

### § 138. Annual and General Conference Held Jointly.

In 1820 the *thirteenth* session of the Annual Conference was also held at New Berlin, Pa., and continued from the 5th to the 9th of June. As this was the fourth year since the session of the first General Conference, the Annual and General Conferences were held jointly, although there were but few items of General Conference business transacted, having reference chiefly to the book and printing affairs of the Association. Hence no delegates were chosen, but all members of the Annual Conference who had the right to vote, had also a voice in these proceedings. From this time until the introduction of the regular delegate system at General Conference in 1839 every minister in the office of an elder had the right to attend General Conference and was entitled to a vote.

John Dreisbach was again elected chairman and Henry Niebel appointed secretary of the Conference. John Dreisbach was also chosen General Book Agent in the place of the deceased Bro. Solomon Miller, and he, with Henry Niebel and John Stambach, were continued as the Standing Book Commit-

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\*) Orwig's *History*, etc., pp. 101, 102.

tee for the examination of such works as should be published. John Stambach located on account of feeble health, and John Peters, Samuel Witt and J. Frey on account of temporal affairs. Daniel Middelkauf and George Lanz entered the itinerancy, and John Erb, John Rickel and John Dehoff, who had traveled before, re-entered. John Erb was elected presiding elder. Henry Hassler, John Breidenstein, David Wolf and George Lanz were ordained deacons, and Michael Walter, Jacob Barber, Moses Dehoff, John Frueh, Benjamin Ettinger and John Schilling, elders.

The preachers were stationed as follows :—

Canaan district, John Erb, P. E.; Schuylkill circuit, Benjamin Ettinger and Jacob Peters; Lancaster circuit, John Kleinfelter and David Wolf; York circuit, Jacob Barber and John Dehoff; Franklin circuit, Leonhart Zimmermann; Berkley circuit, John Frueh; Lake circuit, Samuel Muck.

Salem district, John Dreisbach, P. E.; Union circuit, Adam Kleinfelter and George Lanz; Center circuit, John Schilling and Jacob Baumgartner; Bedford circuit, John Rickel; Somerset circuit, Michael Walter and Moses Dehoff; Canton circuit, Henry Hassler and Daniel Middelkauf; Lancaster (Ohio) circuit, Jacob Kleinfelter and John Breidenstein.

At this Conference 32 itinerants, 50 local preachers, and 1992 members were reported, an increase of 97 members. The preachers' salaries, besides traveling expenses, amounted to \$36.30 each; all receiving the same amount, whether married or single.

### § 139. Retrogression of the Work.

On this subject we permit William W. Orwig to speak first :—

"The previous year, as already intimated, the work had begun to *stagnate*; this year it began to *retrograde*. Although the Society, for the last few years, had annually increased somewhat, in numbers; yet its boundaries had been enlarged but little if any, having formed no new circuit since the last four years. This year it *decreased* in point of numbers. This indeed was not encouraging; but taking into consideration, that the more experienced preachers had during the last years left the itinerancy, and that their places had been filled with men who had no experience, and some of whom were also deficient in other respects, this result need not surprise us, for under such circumstances nothing else could be expected.—Some of the preachers had families to support, and received nothing for them from the societies. Some made the trial to travel *one or two* years, but located then "*on account of family circumstances.*" No wonder! Others, it is true, did the same "*on account of bodily infirmities;*" but whether even in some of these cases *family circumstances*, or in other words, *the impossibility of living on the wind*, were not the real causes of their locating, is still a question. Those who had property to sacrifice, or were blessed with wealthy and sympathizing relatives, who were willing to help them along, could stand it longer; but even in their case it would not do for ever. Cares, not for

riches, but for their very existence, undermined both their *spiritual* and *natural lives*. Temptation became too powerful, and the consequence was that many of the men and youths, who had come to Conference with the firm conviction that God had called them to the ministry, after *one or several years'* trial, returned to their secular business in order to be enabled to support their families as the Scriptures require. If they had not done this, they would have been compelled, either to contract debts without any reasonable prospect of paying them, or to suffer want, unless God had supported them in a miraculous manner, as he did Elijah and the widow of Sarepta. It is true, the number of preachers was too large in proportion to the number of members, there being less than one hundred members to one preacher; yet if the members had annually contributed but one dollar each, toward the support of their ministers, there would either have been no want at all; or if any, it would have been less grievous and injurious. But the contributions toward the support of the ministry did not, on an average, amount to even more than *fifty cents per member!* Yet in justice to the Society, it must be added, that the duty of liberality was not so well understood in those days among Christians generally, as in modern times, especially not in the Evangelical Association. Nor is it improbable, that it was, to some extent, the fault of the ministers themselves, that they were not better supported; partly because they did not wish to be called hirelings, and therefore neglected to explain and enforce the duty of liberality with that stress which they did the duty of *watching* and *prayer*; and partly also, because the proper means were not adopted to realize this end. That this cause, with perhaps some others, had, to a great extent, discouraged and paralyzed the ministry in those days, must appear evident to all who examine its circumstances and affairs. There was not that enterprising spirit in the ministry, to spread and push forward the work, that had before characterized that body, and characterized it again in subsequent times. In short, for some reason or other, the work had begun to stand still and to retrograde."

There is much truth in these pointed remarks, but the writer of them entirely overlooked the potent fact that the depressing effects of the financial and commercial crisis which befell the comparatively young and undeveloped country after the close of the war (1815) still continued so severely that there was scarcely any business or money left. In addition to this, immigration from Europe was much diminished,\* and the young Pennsylvanians became ambitious to step into the English, by which tendency the Evangelical Association as well as other German Churches were more or less affected.†

\* The entire number of immigrants from Europe in 1820 amounted to but 8,485, of whom not one-half were Germans. From 1820 to 1830 only 7,000 German immigrants came into this country.

† The United Brethren in Christ especially realized this tendency. *History of U. B. in Christ.* (German.) pp. 180, etc.

### § 140. Seven Preachers Locate!

In 1821 Conference assembled again in the church at New Berlin, Pa., to hold its *fourteenth* session, which lasted from June 4th to 8th. John Erb was elected chairman and Jacob Kleinfelter appointed secretary. Two itinerant preachers were deposed from office and two local preachers expelled from the Church. *Seven* preachers located, namely, John Dreisbach, John Rickel, John Frueh, Samuel Muck, John Schilling, Leonhart Zimmermann and George Lanz—all on account of physical infirmities or poor health. Bro. Dreisbach exclaims regretfully, almost reproachfully, with respect to this circumstance: "Almost one-third of the number of itinerants of the previous year!"

Although the number of regular itinerants was made 9 less through deposition and location, we see 6 new ones stepping in, namely, John Seybert, John Vandersall, Frederick Glasser, Jacob Bixler, John Stoll and John Eisenberger. Among these several proved to be "chosen vessels"—only think of John Seybert, for instance! Jacob Baumgartner, John Vandersall and Christian Wolf were ordained deacons, and John Dehoff and Adam Kleinfelter as elders. John Kleinfelter was elected presiding elder. The stationing resulted as follows:

Canaan district, John Erb, P. E.; Schuylkill circuit, Jacob Kleinfelter and Jacob Bixler; Lancaster circuit, John Breidenstein and John Eisenberger; York circuit, Benjamin Ettinger and John Vandersall; Franklin circuit, Jacob Baumgartner; Berkley circuit, John Dehoff; Lake circuit, Michael Walter.

Salem district, John Kleinfelter, P. E.; Union circuit, John Seybert and Frederick Glasser; Center circuit, David Wolf and Moses Dehoff; Somerset and Bedford circuit, Jacob Barber and Daniel Middelkauf; Canton circuit, Henry Hassler and Jacob Peters; Lancaster (Ohio) circuit, Adam Kleinfelter and John Stoll.

The membership now counted 1974, a loss of 18 during the past Conference year. The salaries of the preachers came down to \$28.66, all the preachers who traveled the whole year received the same amount, besides traveling expenses, which amounted from \$2.25 to \$25.52. The sum of money which was distributed was \$554.03, averaging 28½ cents per member.

With regard to the locating of so many preachers, Rev. William W. Orwig expresses his view as follows:—

"It is not our object to cast any reflections upon these esteemed brethren; yet we cannot pass by this circumstance, without calling attention to the fact that the desertion from the ranks of the itinerancy of such a large proportion in one year, besides the number who had located during several of the preceding years, notwithstanding that some of them were really unwell, and may perhaps have been almost unable to travel, cannot

easily be reconciled with the high calling and the important work which they had begun in the name of the Lord. Death by starvation would surely not have been their lot, although they might not have been under any obligations to their salaries for it; and that, under the circumstances in which the work was at that time, they left the itinerancy without any better reason than a slight indisposition, and thus by their withdrawal increased the danger and imperiled the very existence of the Church, we do not know how to justify, however well disposed we might be to do so. With our view of the call to the ministry, we cannot justify a cessation of the discharge of the regular official duties, unless that minister should devote in an equally effective manner, both his time and talents to the cause of God. But in no case of accidental indisposition, where perhaps not even any serious debility has taken place, is such a course justifiable—nor is it less censurable where real want of support has been the cause, if such a relation is continued after these obstacles are removed, whether it be by his own efforts or otherwise. To resign the sacred office, because it is deficient in prospects for a proper provision in old age or for accumulating wealth for children or posterity, would be base and a denial of the faith once delivered to the saints.

"This state of things affected Conference for several years to an alarming extent. To *locate*, either on account of bodily infirmities or of family circumstances, had, as it were, become the order of the day, at the sessions of Conference; and yet the evil, it seems, was not properly understood, nor were effective measures taken to remove it, or to arrest its progress.

"While contemplating these unfavorable circumstances of Conference, it is, however, refreshing to see that there were always others, though generally inexperienced men, ready to take the places of those who had withdrawn; and that many of the older brethren, who had withdrawn for the assigned reasons from the ministry for some time, afterward re-entered its ranks, and spent many years of usefulness in the service of the Church."

We again quote from Orwig's History, as follows:—

"Speaking of this time and these circumstances, Mr. Dreisbach says: 'The wives and children of the itinerants of those days were not supported by Conference, for which reason so many preachers were obliged to locate, to enable them, as honest citizens, to support their families decently.' This, then, was the *real cause* why so many of the preachers withdrew from the itinerancy; and yet it does not appear in the Conference minutes of those days, that any proper measures were taken to present this subject in its proper light to the membership, and thus to check the progress of this alarming evil!—Viewed in the light of truth or reason, this must be regarded as a gross neglect of duty. If this subject had been properly explained to the members, every one's duty with regard to it pointed out, and plainly indicated and enforced, there is little room to doubt, that the salary of the preachers might even then have been increased by one-half;

which would have been not only more honorable for the Society, but also contributed greatly to its more rapid spread, its increase in numbers and influence. But in this, as in many other things, great indulgence must be exercised, for the want of knowledge and experience in those days; considering that the Evangelical Association could not become in a few years what it is at present, and that even now it has much to learn and in many respects to reform. The ministers were certainly not lacking sincerity, but intelligence and a proper spirit of enterprise.\*

Equally unsatisfactory and discouraging were the affairs of the Printing Establishment in those days. In speaking of this, Mr. Dreisbach says: 'In the last year (1819) the New Testament (in German) was printed and bound in our establishment, but the edition was much too large for those times and circumstances; for, in consequence of an extraordinarily large importation of books from Europe, during the previous year, the prices had been much reduced, and having other German books yet on hand, and the number of our patrons being comparatively small, our books found a slow sale, and thus the establishment suffered. Hence we were compelled to curtail our printing operations, and to confine ourselves to the publication of some few tracts.'—Speaking of this Conference year, he says: 'It was resolved by this Conference, that the Standing Book Committee shall, if possible, let out the Printing Establishment, if not, the work to be carried on according to the means in hand; or, if deemed best, to be suspended altogether.'—This was about the *last* of the *first* Printing Establishment of the Evangelical Association. The committee let it out for three years; afterward it was sold, and Geo. Miller did all the printing and binding of the books for the Society until, as already stated, the second establishment was erected in 1837. The General Book Committee of the Society was, however, always retained, and the book-trade carried on as circumstances required, and finally all the debts of the Establishment were discharged.

In concluding this subject, we will add what Father Dreisbach says of the year 1826: 'Although our book affairs terminated in this manner, yet we were not without consolation, for we were assured that the purest motives had prompted us to engage in the work, viz., the honor and glory of God, and the welfare of our fellow-men; and in the next place, we were glad that we were not insolvent, but had, after

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\*) It may be in place to insert here an example of the support of preachers in the United Brethren Church about this time. During the Conference year 1821-1822 the amount contributed in their chief Conference (Hagerstown) was \$620.50, which was distributed among 8 itinerant preachers, of which two—probably married ones—received each \$124.10, and the other six each \$62.05. If the above total amount had been divided among 21 preachers, as was the case with our preachers, then each would have received only about \$29.55. Many instances of this kind could be cited. They also felt the terribly oppressive effects of the financial reaction in the country. These facts must also be considered.

all debts were paid, still some means left for carrying on the business in the future."

From this it appears, that the time under consideration was one of sore trials for the Society, especially the year just described, and also the following. It seemed as if pitchy clouds were spreading over the whole horizon of the Society, and the powers of darkness triumphing over the newly risen light for a season.—Of particular persecutions in those days there are no records extant, and it appears as if the violent storm had abated, and the enemies of light and truth had dismissed their apprehensions with regard to this small band of believers. But this state of things was not to last long; the temptation was not to exceed the possibility of endurance, but was to terminate in such a manner as 'to make a way for escape.' A few years after this time,—when the fury of the conflict with the powers of darkness had reached its highest pitch,—signs of better times became perceptible. The light of truth commenced to penetrate at different places, and tokens of the favor and approbation of the Most High became more and more visible, until at last help came out of Zion to this small Israel of God, and glorious revivals occurred in various places, as the sequel of this history will show.

#### § 141. Still Another Year of Trial.

The *fifteenth* session of the Conference was also held in New Berlin, Pa., commencing on June 3rd, 1822. John Kleinfelter was chairman and John Erb secretary. Benjamin Ettinger and Michael Walter located on account of feeble health, and Moses Dehoff on account of family affairs. Joseph Long, Philip Wagner, John W. Miller, Abraham Becker, Frederick Borauf and William Scholty were received into the itinerant ministry. Ordained as deacons, John Seybert and Daniel Middelkauf; as elders, David Wolf, John Breidenstein and Henry Hassler.

Preachers were stationed as follows:—

Canaan district, John Erb, P. E.; Union circuit, Jacob Barber and John Eisenberger; Center circuit, Daniel Middelkauf and John Stoll; York circuit, Adam Kleinfelter and William Scholty; Lancaster circuit, John Vandersall and John W. Miller; Schuylkill circuit, John Breidenstein and Frederick Borauf; Lake circuit, John Dehoff.

Salem district, John Kleinfelter, P. E.; Franklin circuit, Jacob Kleinfelter and Abraham Becker; Berkley circuit, Frederick Glasser; Somerset circuit, Jacob Baumgartner and Joseph Long; Canton circuit, John Seybert and Philip Wagner; Lancaster (Ohio) circuit, David Wolf and Jacob Peters; to seek a new circuit, Henry Hassler.

The number of members was 1936—decrease since previous Conference of 38, itinerant ministers 23, local preachers 41, salary of itinerants \$35.61.

This was another year of sore trials. Most of the circuits lost in num-

ber, some considerably, especially York and Lancaster ; only Canton circuit, in the State of Ohio, increased considerably. John Seybert was the only preacher on this circuit for the greater part of the year, his colleague having been transferred to the Lancaster (Ohio) circuit, in place of Jacob Peters who had been taken sick. Toward Fall a camp-meeting was held on the farm of Mrs. Jolly, a widow. John Kleinfelter was presiding elder and preached powerfully, so that many hearts were moved. Some were anxious to give themselves up to the Lord, but the mob dragged them away. Not much good resulted from this camp-meeting.

The decrease in point of numbers during this year was the greatest, but also the last, which the Society suffered. — On Schuylkill circuit, where the foundation of the glorious reformation, which broke out in the following year, had been laid several years before, the work gradually progressed during this year. Brother John Breidenstein preached several times to deeply attentive audiences in the court-house of Orwigsburg ; some of the hearers were awakened and enlightened, and assented to the word of truth. Some had, as it were, already become secret disciples, but were still afraid to confess it openly before men. Thus many of the place and vicinity were nigh to the kingdom of God, but no conversions occurred during this year. On the whole, the circuit numbered at the close of the year 129 members, one less than the year before, although 16 new members had been received during the year.

The numerous withdrawals from the itinerancy for several years, seem not only to have kept the ministry in a state of feebleness with regard to numbers, but to have discouraged them and the membership more or less. A considerable number of the oldest and most experienced members had withdrawn from the itinerancy, among whom were *John Dreisbach* and *Henry Niebel*. After Albright, Miller, and Walter, these two brethren had, for a number of years, been the leaders of the Society : the former especially had excelled as a general of the small Evangelical army of the Lord. His services were almost indispensable, and it would have been of incalculable benefit to the Church to have enjoyed them still longer. But, although Brother Dreisbach had, in his younger years, been an active and robust man, yet his health had during his fourteen years' itinerancy suffered so much by exposures, fatigues, and excessive labors, both by preaching and traveling, that scarcely any one, who is acquainted with his circumstances, would censure him for locating.—For a number of years afterward he was altogether unable to preach ; and if at the urgent request of his brethren he undertook it, his sufferings would generally be greatly increased thereby for some time. Yet it is a gratifying thought to his friends to know, that this aged father, after a location of about 30 years, re-entered the itinerancy, and labored with success. Several of the other brethren, who located at this time, at a former or subsequent time attempted to serve as itinerants

again—among whom was Henry Niebel, as will appear from the sequel—and some of them were very useful.\*

#### § 142. Changing for the Better.

We now come to the year 1823 and rejoice that a better time is dawning upon the work, although the past Conference year does not offer much cause as yet for gladness.

The *sixteenth* session of Conference opened on the 2nd of June, 1823, in the village of Shrewsbury, Pa., (at that time called Strassburg,) in a church built shortly before in union with the Methodists, and which was the second church of the Evangelical Association. John Erb was elected chairman and John Kleinfelter appointed secretary. The examination of the preachers was as usual close and searching, yet there were no charges preferred this time. The ministry had for several years before been searched keenly.† There was now a number of able, fresh men in the ministry, such as the three Kleinfelters, Seybert, Bixler, Long, Buck, Reisner, Wagner, Kring; and the local veterans John Dreisbach, Henry Niebel and John Erb were excellent advisers.—Again 7 itinerants located at this session, namely John Erb, John Vandersall, John W. Miller, D. Wolf and John Eisenberger on account of shattered health, and Henry Hassler and William Scholty on account of family affairs. But 5 new men entered the itinerancy, namely, Conrad Kring, Thomas Buck, Jacob Foy, Benjamin Bixler and John C. Reisner—the last named had traveled already a part of the past Conference year.‡ —John Stoll, Frederick Glasser, Jacob Frey and William Scholty were ordained as deacons, and Jacob Barber and Adam Kleinfelter were elected presiding elders. The work in Ohio was formed into a presiding elder district.

The stationing resulted as follows :—

Canaan district, John Kleinfelter, P. E.; Schuylkill circuit, John Seybert; Lancaster circuit, Jacob Kleinfelter; York circuit, Benjamin Bixler and Conrad Kring; Franklin and Berkley circuit, Joseph Long and John C. Reisner.

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\*) Orwig's *History*, etc., pp. 110, 112.

†) At that time—and for years afterward—it was the custom to send each preacher outdoors, when his turn came, and in his absence inquire whether there were any charges against him. If charges were preferred he was called in, and the investigation was held. If there was no charge, the next one was sent out, and the one coming in heard from the Chairman the gladsome words, "*No charges, brother.*" Sometimes "complaints" were presented against the one outside which were not regarded as charges, yet they caused a discussion in the absence of the one concerned, and he could of course make no explanation. For this and other reasons, this custom was abandoned, and now each preacher must be examined in his presence.

‡) Mr. Reisner was also the first *European born* preacher that entered the Evangelical ministry. He became a distinguished preacher and was also an able writer.

Salem district, Jacob Barber, P. E.; Union and Center circuit, John Breidenstein, Jacob Foy and Abraham Becker; Somerset circuit, John Dehoff and Thomas Buck; Lake circuit, Frederick Glasser.

Ohio district, Adam Kleinfelter, P. E.; Lancaster (Ohio) circuit, John Stoll and Philip Wagner; Canton circuit, Jacob Baumgartner; to seek a new circuit, Jacob Frey.\*

The number of itinerants now was only 19, local preachers 59, members 1854—a decrease of 82 during the past year. The salary of the preachers was \$31.66. "These were times that tried men's souls," and their bodies too! Severe labor, exposures to all sorts of weather, and oftentimes hunger and fastings, had their effects even upon strong constitutions.

Speaking of this Conference and the circumstances of the Association, John Dreisbach says: "Although we now had three districts, yet we numbered 4 itinerants and 138 members less than in 1820. This was discouraging indeed, yet we did not despond, but looking upon this state of things as a trial of our faith, we took courage and in humble reliance on God's promises, that he would make us fruitful, extend our borders, and give us many more souls, we continued our labors, and we were not disappointed. Praise his holy Name forever!"

#### § 143. The Dawn of a Better Day.

The dawning light of a new and blessed day now began to break upon the struggling Association and the "Sun of Righteousness" with "healing in his wings" beamed with gracious brilliancy upon the small Church. A lengthy quotation from Rev. Wm. W. Orwig will introduce to the reader some of the preliminary details concerning it:†

"In this year began the glorious awakening and revival at Orwigsburg and vicinity, in Schuylkill Co., Pa.; and as this was one of the greatest and most extensive revivals that ever took place in the connection, we here subjoin a somewhat circumstantial report of it, being fully persuaded, that it will not only be interesting to the majority of our readers, but also edifying and encouraging. The revival continued for years, and extended more and more in various directions, to the salvation of many souls. Not only the neighborhood, but also many other regions experienced its salutary influence. Some of the new converts wrote to their relatives, friends, and acquaintances in distant parts of the country, or visited them, relating what great things the Lord had done for them. Or when they were visited by them, they scattered, by their confessions, exhortations, fervent and believing prayers, as well as by their fear of God and their godly walk, the good

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\*) "To seek a new circuit"—This was in many respects the most difficult work and would show, among other things, "of what metal a man was made." In most cases, however, these pioneer brethren succeeded tolerably well, all circumstances taken into consideration.

†) Orwig's *History*, etc., pp. 114. 115.

seed richly into their hearts. Those of our preachers, who were invited from other circuits to attend the general and camp-meetings here, as well as those in charge of the circuit, during the years of the awakening, were seized by the fire of the unfeigned love to God and man, that was burning there, and extended the work in all directions, so that almost the whole Association was more or less affected by the fruits of this revival. However we go back and consider first the moral condition of this place and vicinity, prior to this revival, and then its origin, progress, and results.

"Schuylkill, Berks, and several of the adjacent Counties, were long before noted for their immorality, their adherence to the old ecclesiastical institutions, their abhorrence of all innovations, and their hatred of the sects. In some places, when a new minister was to be called, little or no inquiry was made concerning the candidate's moral or religious character; but the question was, whether he was opposed to such innovations as Sunday-schools, Bible, Tract, and Missionary societies, prayer-meetings, etc. If this was the case, he was the man for these people. Some parts of these counties had by their opposition to education, learning and improvements of every kind, become a by-word almost throughout the entire country. All kinds of sin and vices reigned in all the so-called Christian congregations; and when now and then a person was found, who saw the corruption to some extent, and ventured to censure it and to disapprove the spurious service of God, he was considered and despised as a fanatic. The few individuals who were better disposed and anxious to save their souls, living among these ungodly crowds of nominal Christians, were suppressed and had but little influence on their rough fellow-members. Such was the condition of Orwigsburg and vicinity, prior to the great revival in question."

#### § 144. The Great Awakening at Orwigsburg, Pa.

From the year 1806, when Rev. George Miller had a remarkable awakening on the west side of the Susquehannah river, the center of Church activity remained on that side. The work spread across the Allegheny mountains and through Maryland into Virginia. On that side the first camp-meeting was held (1810), the first church built (1816), the first publishing house established (1816), the first, second and third General Conference sessions held (1816-20-26), the fifth (1812), sixth (1813), seventh (1814), eighth (1815), ninth (1816), tenth (1817), eleventh (1818), twelfth (1819), thirteenth (1820), fourteenth (1821), fifteenth (1822), sixteenth (1823), seventeenth (1824), eighteenth (1825), etc., etc., Annual Conference sessions were held on that side of the river and many awakenings took place, while on the east side of the river (the territory now in the East Pennsylvania Conference) the work was progressing slowly with intervals of slight retrogressions. But now came a turn for the better for

the east side, commencing with a wonderful awakening and revival in and around Orwigsburg which properly started in the year 1823, and continued for about 3 years most gloriously.

The main source of information concerning this remarkable work of grace is a written report by *John Hammer* of Orwigsburg, which contains his own observations; and also fragments from Bishop John Seybert's diary. Intermixed with these are also Rev. William W. Orwig's observations who became himself an eye- and ear-witness and a subject of the operations of grace when the awakening had been going on for about eighteen months and was in its most blessed stage.

Mr. Hammer's document begins with the aborigines of this region, and their cruelties committed against the white settlers. But by and by, he goes on to state, the region was peopled, and its inhabitants were considered a moral people; although one could not hear a word about true Christianity among them, nor about the necessity of the new birth. The nature and necessity of conversion was something entirely unknown to them, though some seemed to have an instinctive feeling, that, to inherit eternal life, man must experience a change of heart. But these impressions of the Holy Ghost were, as we may well infer, generally opposed and quenched by the fatal consolations of false teachers, who comforted their people with the assurance that the observance of various religious rites and ceremonies and a correct external deportment was sufficient for salvation. Thus men generally lived in indifference, and walked in darkness.—At one time Mr. Albright came to that part of the country, and preached in a church near Orwigsburg; but as Satan soon found his agents willing to circulate the foulest reports concerning him, he was forbidden to repeat his visit. Thus also a certain Methodist minister preached several times in the house of a church-elder, near Orwigsburg; but when the parson of the place heard of it, he violently inveighed against it, and the elder did not dare to admit the strange minister into his house again. Other offers of pious preachers were likewise declined, and thus matters went on till the year 1817, when it pleased God to work powerfully, and soon after to awaken a man named *Daniel Focht*, proprietor of an iron-forge near Orwigsburg, who was thoroughly converted the following year, by the instrumentality of those Evangelical preachers Adam Kleinfelter and Moses Dehoff. This man, soon after his conversion, felt a divine call to preach the Gospel, and clothed with power from on high, he stood up in the name of the Lord as a real "son of thunder,"—preaching with power, denouncing sin and vice of every description scathingly, and producing a considerable sensation among the people. He insisted on repentance and faith, representing Christ as an impartial and perfect Saviour, and assured all, that if they would come to him in true contrition of heart and in faith, they would be accepted. God blessed his labors, so that in the course of a few years a band had gathered around him, who were resolved to serve the Lord. But, as

might be expected, persecution soon followed ; however, instead of allowing this to discourage him, he made still greater efforts, faithfully improving every opportunity to advance the salvation of his fellow-men and to do good. In 1822 he once requested and obtained permission to preach in the court-house of Orwigsburg. God granted him strength and power from on high, so that a considerable portion of his audience were powerfully affected and thoroughly awakened. But on a certain clergyman, who happened to be present, the word made quite a different impression. He was filled with wrath, went his way, and endeavored to circulate slanderous reports about Bro. Focht ; he effected, however, but little with his machinations.

Shortly after this meeting in the court-house, a camp-meeting was held on the farm of Bro. Focht, which was richly blessed of God. Some of the citizens of Orwigsburg, among others Richard Rickert and Joseph Zoll, were awakened and enlightened, who in their anxiety for salvation, invited John Breidenstein, then preacher in charge of Schuylkill circuit, to come and preach in their neighborhood. Mr. Breidenstein accepted the invitation and preached several times in the court-house at Orwigsburg, to the entire satisfaction of many of his hearers. On one occasion, the court-house was not opened at the proper hour, when he preached in the school-house of the place. Many heard him gladly, and some even received and entertained him at their homes. But as usual, the parsons were again his principal enemies, who by slanderous reports endeavored to blast his reputation, and thus to alienate the hearts of the people from him ; but again they failed. Next they assailed his doctrine, maintaining that men could not, in this life, be freed from sin ; that even the holiest and most devoted persons were sinners as long as they lived on earth, and could not keep the commandments of God, etc. Mr. Breidenstein refuted these errors, representing Christ as a perfect Saviour, who saves such as submit to Him in true repentance and in faith, from all sin, and makes them *free indeed*. God blessed his preaching abundantly to the awakening and enlightening of many souls, who then commenced to search the Scriptures and inquire for the way of salvation.

In 1823, as may be seen from the minutes of Conference of that year, John Seybert was appointed to Schuylkill circuit, and found the field white for the harvest. The seed of the divine word had not only germinated and struck deep roots, it also began to bear fruit, but had not yet come to a perfect development. Bro. Seybert commenced preaching regularly in and about Orwigsburg, in the court-house, in school-houses, private dwellings, and sometimes also in the woods under the canopy of heaven. In the month of September he had an appointment in a school-house, 3 miles from Orwigsburg ; but when he arrived at the spot, he found the school-house locked. A poor colored man named Wilson, who lived in a tenant's house, opened his door to him, and he preached from the words John 1, 12. 13. : "He came unto his own," etc. The locking of the school-house proved a

blessing in this case, as during this sermon God opened the hearts of many, as he once did the heart of Lydia by the preaching of Paul, and henceforth some of them found no more rest, till by penitence and faith, they had obtained the forgiveness of their sins. The meetings continued to increase in earnestness and importance, and at this time Bro. Seybert made the acquaintance of Christopher Wagner, who kept a hotel two miles below Orwigsburg, and was, with his family, to some extent awakened and inquiring for the way of salvation. On the 30th of November Bro. Seybert preached for the first time in his house, from Acts 3, 22. 23. Speaking of this meeting, Bro. Seybert says: "An uncommon weeping and wailing broke out here, and awakened sinners were heard to exclaim, 'lost! lost!'" On the next day he held a prayer-meeting with the anxious inquirers, and the following Sunday the slumbering elements of conviction broke forth during a meeting in the house of said Wilson, where Bro. Daniel Focht preached, having been requested by Bro. Seybert by letter, as the latter was obliged to meet other appointments on that day. Accordingly, he came with several other friends and preached; and they continued laboring with the penitents till evening, when seven of them were permitted to taste God's pardoning grace. This, then, was the first complete victory in this reformation; part of Wagner's family, and some persons from Orwigsburg, were the first fruits of it. The pardoned souls seem to have been thoroughly filled with the divine life and with heavenly joy, so that mighty shouting and praising of God took place among them. In noticing this occurrence, our informant says: "Among them there was a woman of Orwigsburg, who wrestled and prayed so violently in her anguish of soul, and was then so richly filled with the love of God, that her husband, Mr. Neff, who witnessed the scene, was so much affected and moved, that he too made up his mind to take hold of the work, and to surrender himself to God. The next day he wrestled in an upper chamber of his house 3 or 4 hours with God, when light burst upon his soul, and he was so filled with divine love, that he with his wife greatly rejoiced in God. Soon afterward we held meetings in his house." It is also stated, that about the same time an extremely affecting and melting meeting took place in Richard Rickert's house, one of the two men who had invited Breidenstein to come and preach in their vicinity. The weeping of the whole congregation at this meeting was such that it might have been taken for that of one man.

During the Winter of 1824, there was a great stir among the people, and a number of precious souls were awakened and converted to the Lord. Bro. Seybert writes, that on the 17th and 18th of January, Samuel Rickert, Joseph M., and Jacob Saylor were converted, all of whom afterward became preachers of the Gospel; subsequently many more promising men and youths were converted, who became useful ministers of the Gospel, some of whom are still in the itinerancy, while others have entered into the joy of their Lord. This region furnished, on the whole, a comparatively large number of candi-

dates for the ministry, most of whom became very useful. The first class, consisting of 25 members, was formed here by Bro. Seybert on Jan. 23, 1824. B. Dreher, jr., was appointed leader, and B. Neff assistant. Toward the close of this Conference year in June, the number of converts amounted to 40, and many more were in a state of anxious inquiry, who, with many others, were happily converted at a later period. But unfortunately the first class-leader, soon after his appointment, suffered himself to be frightened and overcome by the enemy, so that William Wagner was elected in his stead. But when the work took such a glorious turn, Satan and his followers rose to oppose it by slanders, lies, and calumnies ; the consequence was, that in many cases parents were set against their children, and children against their parents, husbands against their wives, and wives against their husbands, so that the words of our Saviour, "Henceforth five in one house will be at variance, two will be against three, and three against two," etc., were literally fulfilled. Yet, where the children of God remained faithful, the opponents were generally won for the truth.

Soon after this, Hammer's, Reifschneider's, and some more influential families, were awakened and converted ; and as the heads of several of them were officers in the respective Churches of the place, and enjoyed a high reputation, it caused a great deal of excitement. This raised the indignation of the selfish clergymen of these Churches to the highest degree ; but the work being of God, they were unable to arrest its progress. For several years the work continued to extend and deepen in its influence, because these salutary effects upon the morality of Orwigsburg and vicinity could not be mistaken ; and that a great moral reformation had taken place, could not be denied. Not only such as submitted to the influences of the Spirit, reformed their lives, but even those who refused, were compelled to change their external conduct for the better, to sustain their reputation, as those who obstinately persisted in their sins and vices, were respected no longer.—In several families the work of grace commenced with a child ten or twelve years of age, and continued until all the members of the family had become willing subjects of divine grace. Not unfrequently it occurred that one or more members of a godless family were arrested and converted, who would then attest by their pious and godly lives, that their conversion was a genuine change of heart, and not a mere outward change of life. In short, people of every age and every rank espoused the cause of God ; from the child of ten years to the gray-haired sire, some of whom had belonged to the most honorable, and others to the most degraded classes of society.

In the 2nd year of the revival, John C. Reisner and John W. Miller were the regular ministers of the circuit, during which time the work was in its best state, the number of converts was doubled, so that at the end of the year two new classes were formed, of which Father John Hammer and

Francis Hoffman were appointed leaders. During this year the first camp-meeting was held in that neighborhood, on the land of Christopher Wagner, which was richly blessed with God's grace and the conversion of many precious souls. This meeting is represented as having been so eminently blessed, that its equal is not often found.

Toward the close of this Conference year, in the month of May, Rev. William W. Orwig, with his mother and some other relatives, made a visit of several weeks to this part of the country, where he was an eye and ear witness of the great work of grace. The work itself was something entirely new to him, having never before enjoyed the privilege of witnessing anything similar. His mother was a member of said Wagner's family, who were at this time burning with the ardor of their first love, and naturally felt a deep interest in the salvation of their children and relatives, sparing no efforts to gain them over to the cause of God and his kingdom.

Nearly every evening there was preaching or prayer-meeting somewhere in the neighborhood, and two or three times divine service on Sunday, which opportunities were diligently improved during their stay. The exercises were, on the whole, very lively and powerful; a great deal of shouting, leaping, and praising of God occurred; and in all probability matters were sometimes carried too far, as is generally the case at great revivals. Yet Mr. Orwig did not then as much as suspect anything of the kind; and although he understood not the nature of the work, yet he deemed everything holy and pure. This visit of Rev. Orwig and his mother, was the occasion of introducing the work into his home in Union county, where it spread considerably, and has continued to this day.

In the third year of the revival, Conrad Kring and John Erly were the preachers of the circuit, and the work continued and spread farther and wider in various directions.

In 1826, the first church of Orwigsburg was built, which was the third of the Association. From this time souls were converted to God nearly every year, though cases of backsliding and other adversities did also frequently occur. Yet Orwigsburg and vicinity has ever since been one of the principal points of the connection, and many who had been awakened and converted there, removed to other places, especially the States of Ohio and Illinois, where not a few of them became an honor to the Association afterwards.

A considerable part of the first fruits of the work have long since been delivered from all struggle, and in triumphs of faith have entered into the joy of their Master. Some of them were already advanced in years, when they entered into the vineyard of their Lord, and hence their time of labor was short; but others were called to their home in the prime of life. May those, who are still engaged in the noble struggle, imitate them in their good works!

During this year some doors and hearts were likewise opened to the

truth in other parts of Schuylkill circuit, especially in the tps. of Bern and Heidelberg, Berks co., beginning in the families of Klein, Tobias, Loos, Deppen, and others. Some of the other circuits also increased somewhat in point of numbers; but on most of them they continued decreasing, so that at the close of the year, the increase in all was but small.\*

#### § 145. Conversion of the Hammer Family.

JOHN HAMMER was a highly respected citizen, residing in the vicinity of Orwigsburg, and was also a prominent member of the Lutheran Church of that section. His outward conduct was moral and perhaps unblamable, yet, like Nicodemus of old, he knew nothing of the new birth. He had a large family growing up, but all were strangers to the life that cometh from God.

The oldest son, JOHN, became, in spite of a better training, a *prodigal*, a slave to strong drink, and committed such misdeeds that he was at last confined in durance vile. Finally he became such a castaway that even his comrades in sin were disgusted with him. When the work of conversion began in the community, somebody said to him—perhaps jokingly—“John, how would it be if *you* were to go to these ‘Strawelers?’” This suggestion, though spoken ironically, made a profound impression upon him, and he went as soon as possible to an evening prayer-meeting. When he appeared there the friends felt insulted that they should, in addition to all the other persecutions, also be persecuted by *this one*—as they supposed. But John behaved quite decently, became deeply affected, was soon soundly converted and proved his conversion by a *new godly life*. After his conversion he retired daily into a somewhat isolated out-building, which soon arrested the attention of his mother. She then told her husband of it, expressing her desire to ascertain what John was doing there. The parents followed him thither and listened—and what did they hear? John was praying fervently to God and gave thanks that he had saved him from the horrible pit of sin and placed his feet upon the rock of salvation, and implored the Lord to have mercy upon his parents and lead them also into the way of life. Father and mother became deeply affected, and the mother exclaimed, “O God! must it needs be that our *lost* child thus prays for us?” They now both began to seek salvation and soon afterward found the grace and peace of God.—The conversion of John also exerted a great influence upon the other members of the family, all of whom were afterward converted to God. Many other persons were thereby led to consider their ways, and turned to God. So the word of God was also fulfilled in this case: “Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.” (Psalm 40, 3.) But it was strikingly significant of the bitter prejudice and spiritual blindness of some would-be Christians, that they reprimanded Father John

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\* ) Orwig's *History of the Evangelical Association*, pp. 115–122.

Hammer, because he had "permitted his son John to join *these wretched people!*"

§ 146. John Seybert's Report of This Awakening.

Another very interesting description of this glorious work we obtain from a communication by Bishop John Seybert published in his biography which, although it contains some of the items aforementioned, gives them in his own vigorous language, and also furnishes some new details, as follows: "The great awakening and glorious work of conversion at Orwigsburg was already initiated in the year 1818, when Bro. Adam Kleinfelter was permitted to preach at the house of Daniel Focht, six miles northeast of the town. He was the owner and proprietor of considerable iron works, a prominent and respected man. By this preaching Mr. Focht was enlightened, and he and a few neighbors were soundly converted to God.

"But persecution arose against this work of conversion and the devil raged vehemently in his servants, the unconverted clergymen, who provoked their blind followers to pursue the sheep of the Lord Jesus Christ with villification, lies, and slanders. One of the unconverted church officers opened a correspondence with Bro. Focht, but as the latter had the Scriptures and the unction of the Holy Spirit on his side, the controversy soon ended favorably for the cause of truth. The words of Paul were here strikingly fulfilled: 'For all who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution.' (2 Tim. 3, 12.) Parents persecuted their children, husbands their wives, and *vice versa*, and neighbor arose against neighbor. But the work of the Lord was like a great fire, which, once started, cannot be put out. The despised children of God were engaged almost daily in secret and public prayer and became filled with such a measure of heavenly life and power and had the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost so abundantly, that they not only shouted and leaped for joy, but also had grace to lead a pious life. By this means one after another was brought under conviction. These first members often practiced fasting and faithfully followed the Lamb in God-pleasing self-denial. They were devoted, fervent, full of heavenly fire in their worship, and walked before men in holiness, manifesting humility, and affection toward friends and enemies. Bro. Focht was appointed as class-leader of this little band, and as he was both pious and talented he soon became a useful local preacher, proving an excellent helper when the work broke out at Orwigsburg.

"On the 15th of July I preached my first sermon in the town of Orwigsburg, which was then the county seat of Schuylkill County—on Ezekiel 33, 11. Mr. Joseph Zoll entertained me. I preached in the courthouse where I did not have perfect liberty, as it was the first time I ever preached in such a house. On the 17th of August I preached in the morning near town in the grove, on Romans 2, 4. 5. 6. ; and in the evening again in the court-house. In the morning I had a struggle when it was time to

pray ; it occurred to me, it might be more prudent to pray *standing*, but I conquered, fell upon my knees, and God poured his spirit upon me in such a measure that I date the great work of conversion at Orwigsburg from that morning. A melting power fell upon the people and the word of God found way into many hearts and houses. Afterward I placed a stone on the spot where I had stood, and engraved the date upon it, so that people might see when and where I obtained the victory over the devil, and when and where the work of God at Orwigsburg had its more direct beginning. Previous to that day everything seemed to be shut up, but thereafter there was an atmosphere of liberty, light and life within and outside the town.\*

“On the 14th of September I preached again in the court-house, and in the afternoon my appointment was in a school-house, but it was found to have been locked and the windows nailed fast. A certain *clergyman* had caused this ; but a poor despised (colored) man let me into his house, where I preached on John 1, 11. 12, and the power of God was so great that the foundations of Babylon now began to tremble on the east side of the town for the blessed sermon on the 17th of August was preached on the west side. The closing of the school-house caused a great stir, and the sincere people rose against their blind ‘*Pfarrer*’. From here Mr. Richard Rickert took me to his house. He owned a valuable homestead south of the town, and in his house I preached on the 14th of October on Revelation 22, 17. From the 4th to the 7th of November I preached 4 times within and outside the town, and on the 30th I was there again, whereupon conversions began to take place and there were so many of the slain, that I had to write to Bro. Focht, who came and led the work during my absence. On the 7th of December 7 souls were converted in this meeting—in the house of the aforementioned poor colored man.

“On the 17th and 18th of January, 1824, I was again in this neighborhood when three young men, Samuel Rickert, Joseph M. Saylor, and Jacob Saylor were converted, all three of whom became preachers in our Church. On the 23rd I formed the first class, which numbered 25 members. But their first class-leader became unfaithful, so that I had to appoint another, which I did on the 19th of February. Now the work progressed rapidly. We had remarkable meetings, persons of all classes were converted, drunkards, swearers, pipers, drummers, fiddlers and card-players and also fine, respectable men. On the 21st of May, I for the first time administered the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper to the newly organized congregation, on which occasion much weeping, deep commotions, and a blessed waiting before the Lord took place. Now the ice was evidently broken, and I was exceed-

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\* ) When the author was stationed at Orwigsburg, in A. D. 1855, he heard the old members speak enthusiastically of Seybert’s overwhelming sermon on that occasion, and the sacred spot where he had stood was still to be seen.

ingly blessed as I saw poor sinners from all sides, and of all grades of people, pressing to the Saviour. Within four months 40 souls were hopefully converted to God, and I could report *seventy* as 'newly converted' from my field of labor at Conference. At Orwigsburg a deep, solid foundation was laid for the work of the Evangelical Association." \*

From this time forward Orwigsburg was for many years a renowned place in the Evangelical Association. From this wonderful revival came forth a number of excellent itinerant preachers, most of whom did heroic service in the work, viz: Charles Hammer, John P. Leib, Charles Hesser, Joseph M. Saylor, Jacob Saylor, Francis Hoffman and Daniel Berger; and the following useful local preachers: John Hammer and Samuel Rickert.

#### § 147. An Interesting Conference Session, and a Memorable Camp-Meeting.

The *seventeenth* session of the Conference was held in Shrewsbury, York County, Pa., from June 7th to 10th, 1824. John Kleinfelter was the Chairman and Jacob Kleinfelter the Secretary. John Breidenstein, Jacob Frey, and Jacob Baumgartner located, and John Kleinfelter could visit but a few circuits during a portion of the year as presiding elder. Thus the circuits York, Franklin and Berkley had no presiding elder this year. Henry Wissler and Daniel Mannwiller were received into the itinerancy and Jacob Bixler and Frederick Borauf a second time, having traveled before. Joseph Long, Abraham Becker, Philip Wagner and John C. Reisner were ordained as deacons, and John Seybert as elder.

The preachers were stationed as follows:

Canaan district, John Kleinfelter, P. E.; Schuylkill circuit, John C. Reisner and John W. Miller; Lancaster circuit, William Scholty and Abraham Becker.

Salem district, Jacob Barber, P. E.; Union and Center circuit, Philip Wagner, Conrad Kring and Thomas Buck; Somerset circuit, John Stoll and Frederick Borauf.

(The following circuits had no presiding elder this coming year: York circuit, John Seybert and Jacob Bixler; Franklin and Berkley circuit, Jacob Kleinfelter, Benjamin Bixler and Henry Wissler.)

Ohio district, Adam Kleinfelter, P. E.; Canton circuit, Jacob Foy; Mansfield circuit, John Dehoff; Lancaster (Ohio) circuit, Joseph Long and Daniel Mannwiller.

The young preacher Jacob Peters died during the year. The preachers' salary for this year besides traveling expenses was \$35.88. This was certainly no temptation to any one to enter the itinerancy.

The membership amounted to 1878—which showed an increase of 84. This was the beginning of a fresh advance of the work, and during the Conference year considerable revivals occurred on Lancaster, York and

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\*) Seybert's *Leben und Wirken* pp. 89-92.

Center circuits, besides the great one on Schuylkill circuit. In the southern part of Berks county, between Womelsdorf and Reading, where the work was still new, it continued to advance gradually, and toward the close of the ensuing Conference year the memorable camp-meeting, known as "*Ernst's Camp-meeting*," was held in that vicinity, which was broken up in a terrible manner by a godless mob, headed by their pastor. John Seybert, who was present, furnished a report as follows :

"At last *Ernst* came to be in *earnest*, so that he consented to have a camp-meeting on his land, which began on Monday, May 29th, 1825. On Wednesday and Thursday, the last of May and the first of June, there was a great stir, awakenings and conversions taking place on the camp-ground. Amongst others a poor cripple, who had but one arm, was converted during the meeting, and confessed that he had been hired by the mob to stone us. But when he became convinced of his malice and sinfulness, through the powerful preaching of the word of God, the stones in his pockets became too heavy for him, and pulled him, as it were, down on his knees for prayer. The preaching at this meeting was eminently powerful and full of unction, and at length the grace of God became so overwhelming, that sinners fell fainting to the ground. These effects were so entirely new, and so little understood by the ignorant rabble, that some of them were raised to such a pitch of malicious frenzy, that, like famished beasts of prey, they fell upon those under conviction, and dragged them from the camp-ground to a house close by, where they had an ungodly physician at hand, in order to restore their sin-sick hearts, by bleeding and sprinkling water over their faces, and to heal wounds that were inflicted by the sword of the Spirit. There was also an ungodly Reformed clergyman present, by the name of B. Boyer, who endeavored to quiet and console the awakened souls in their sins. Around this pastor, an impudent, impious mob of his followers had gathered, roaming over the woods, armed with clubs and other murderous weapons. These club-men the worthy pastor called his sheep, saying that he had come to the meeting for the purpose of watching them. But he also several times threatened to whistle for his *hounds*, to chase the foxes to their holes. Thus his Church-members were, by his own confession, both his sheep and his hounds at the same time. On Thursday afternoon and evening, this mob became very numerous. The dismal and terrible night had set in, and the sons of Belial, being well instructed by their leader in reference to the attack, some armed with clubs, and others in the rear with dung-forks, as I afterward learned, were now ready to commence their work of destruction. At this time their leader was in the rear, fully assured that his commands would be faithfully executed without his presence.

"Bro. Daniel Mannwiller commenced preaching from Ps. 7, 12-14 ; but before he came to the conclusion, the mob of club-men rushed in through the passage between the preachers' stand and the tents, uttering dreadful oaths and threats, and tore off the boards from the lower part of

the stand, after which a terrible shower of stones and clubs followed, so that no one's life was safe any longer. Divine service was at once broken up, and the devil and his vassals took possession of the camp-ground. The fire-places for illuminating the ground were torn down, and it was altogether impossible to keep order. Entreaties and remonstrances seemed but to increase their fury. The mob continued to rave and roar all night, more hideously than wild beasts. Sometimes they would bellow like cows and calves; then crow like roosters; then curse and swear, damning their souls to hell, while uttering the most terrible imprecations!—Reader! these were mostly members of one or the other of the Protestant Churches, and gloried in the genuine faith!—O how we longed for the light of the day, during that night! We would often say, as did the prophet of old: ‘Watchman, what of the night? watchman, what of the night?’ But there were also some decent persons on the ground, and these gathered around us and about the tents. On Friday morning, part of the mob left the ground, when the tumult subsided.—Bro. Ernst, on whose land the meeting was held, was that night mercilessly beaten with a club, and Bro. Daniel Loos had one thrown with such force against his breast, that for some time he was unable to breathe; and others were severely stoned. Yet God had mercifully protected us, so that no lives were lost, which, under those circumstances, was almost a miracle.—Some of the friends advised to close the meeting at once; while others preferred to have another sermon preached—the latter course was adopted. I preached, accordingly, from Ps. 43, 3., and Bro. Breidenstein added a powerful exhortation; God's grace worked mightily, and the enemies raved violently. Toward noon we broke up—one day sooner than we had intended.”

When Satan rages he often overshoots the mark, and some of his missiles recoil with terrific force. So it was here. When on Thursday, June 2nd, Bro. Mannwiller was preaching, the “incarnated devils” began to tear off the boards from the preachers’ stand, and a fearful shower of stones and clubs was thrown upon the people, so that no one’s life was secure. At that instant the mighty Lord and Saviour of men graciously saved a young man who had been earnestly seeking the pardon of his sins under a deep distress of mind, and filled him with divine peace and heavenly joy. This young man was *Isaac Deppen*, who afterwards became a useful itinerant minister. “The wicked shall see it and be grieved, he shall gnash with his teeth and melt away, the desire of the wicked shall perish.” (Psalm 112, 10.)

“Thus, at this camp-meeting, a violent storm of persecution had arisen against the Society. Shortly after this, on a Sunday, some of the friends visited a widow, who was deeply concerned for the salvation of her soul, in order to pray with her. Pastor Boyer preached on that day not far off, and at the close of the sermon news reached the congregation that the *fanatics* were at widow Kaufman’s, for that was her name. Immediately a crowd,

some on horseback, others on foot, hastened to her house, armed with clubs and their shirt sleeves rolled up, in order to drive away the fanatics. But when this infuriated mob reached the house, most of the friends had left already, and the rest escaped this time without any injury. At another time, during a meeting at Bro. D. Loos', the windows of the first and second stories were broken by the mob. And some time after, a great disturbance took place during a meeting at Jacob Klein's, where about 200 club-men—although baptized and nominal Christians—had congregated.

"When it had come to this, that the members of the Society could hold their meetings only at the peril of their lives, they claimed the protection of the law; they prosecuted some of the ring-leaders of the persecutors, together with their preacher. And when these saw what the consequences were likely to be, they agreed to compromise the matter without a judicial decision, pledging themselves not to disturb our religious meetings hereafter. But the pastor alone was not satisfied with this, and afterward brought a suit against our friends, claiming damages for his character, which, however, was discovered before the court in its true light. He lost the suit and had to pay the costs, which almost ruined him. In consequence of this, he lost his influence, fell out with his parishioners, was dismissed by them, and thereby reduced to abject poverty.—But the reader will be astonished to learn, that about twenty years afterward, the writer saw this same parson, Boyer, at a camp-meeting in Dry Valley, Union County, Pa., with other poor penitents, prostrate on his knees around the altar, crying to God for mercy and pardon. But it appeared as if he lacked the proper contrition of heart, and whether he ever became a partaker of divine grace, the writer does not know, but heartily wishes it to be so.

"But after all, this persecution served to promote the best interests of the believers in those parts of the country. It stirred them up to greater activity and zeal in the service of their Master, and the work increased from time to time, and has prospered to this day. The history of this persecution, and what happened at a later period in Berks and some adjacent counties, will fully confirm what has been said in this history, of the moral condition of these counties, and the character of some of the preachers of those times.\*)

About this time the work made blessed progress on the Lancaster (Ohio) circuit. The following extracts from Joseph Long's diary are interesting: "The 12th of July, 1825, I went to Stump's and preached in the evening on Isaiah 3, 10, 11. On Saturday I had no appointment; I fasted from Friday evening until Sunday morning and then preached at 11 o'clock on Psalm 84, 12. We had a warm time and tears flowed down over many cheeks." On the 17th of September the presiding elder Adam Kleinfelter and Bro. Long held a meeting, and after the sermon by the presiding

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\*) Orwig's *History of the Evangelical Association*, pp. 126-127.

elder on 1 Timothy 6, 6. a class-meeting was held, "upon which the heavens were opened and divine blessings poured out in great fullness. The shouting and praising of God became overwhelming so that the meeting could not be continued. The presiding elder himself then also yielded to the divine power and joined in glorifying God." On the 14th of February, 1825, Bro. Long had an appointment at the house of Daniel Hoy, about which he thus writes: "I retired into solitude where the words of Moses to Hobab came to me, and intended to preach from them, but, remarkably I could not find the place where they are recorded in the Bible, nor was it necessary, for the Lord set a captive free which filled our mouths with laughter and our tongues with singing, so that I could not preach. I then exhorted from the 126th Psalm." The following report of a quarterly meeting will also throw light upon the manner of working about that time: "On Saturday, March 12th, 1825, our big meeting commenced at Philip Hoy's. I preached first on Luke 10. 42, Bro. Kleinfelter exhorted after me. The Lord drew very nigh and blessed the meeting, and we had a melting time. In the evening Bro. Kleinfelter preached on Matthew 6, 9-13. Father Benedum (probably a United Brethren preacher) exhorted after him, and I followed in English. Then we sang and prayed; several persons wept and cried for mercy and others praised the Lord. Sunday at 10 A. M. I preached on Matthew 22, 1-14; Bro. Buettner exhorted, and after that we had the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. At 2 P. M. Father Benedum preached, Bro. Schmalz exhorted after him, and Bro. Kleinfelter followed in English. The word was accompanied by a great blessing. In the evening Bro. Kleinfelter preached on the parable of the prodigal son, and after that we prayed with penitent souls. The Lord himself came into our midst, and virtue proceeded from Him, healing several souls."—Thus we see how the brethren held their meetings in those years and what blessed success attended them.

**§ 148. The 18th Conference Session—John Seybert elected Presiding Elder.**

On the 7th of June, 1825, the *eighteenth* session of Conference began in New Berlin, Pa. Adam Kleinfelter was elected chairman, and John Seybert appointed secretary. William Scholty was expelled from the Church and "S. M." (?) deposed from the ministry. John Stoll and Benjamin Bixler located on account of poor health, and John Kleinfelter, Jacob Kleinfelter, Jacob Bixler and Frederick Glasser on account of family affairs. Joseph M. Saylor, Jacob Erly, John Hamilton, George Reich, George Schneider and Benjamin Becker, M. D. were received into the itinerancy. Conrad Kring, John W. Miller, Jacob Foy, and Thomas Buck were ordained as deacons, and John Stoll as elder. John Seybert was elected presiding elder. In his journal he deploras his election, and says the brethren had elevated him to a high station and burdened him with an office for which

he was exceedingly incompetent, but they knew nothing of his deficiencies or they would not have entrusted to him this important position\* etc. We may confidently believe that Seybert wrote this with all sincerity, but the brethren thought differently, and future events fully justified their expectations.

The preachers were stationed as follows :

Canaan district, John Seybert, P. E.; Schuylkill circuit, Conrad Kring and Jacob Erly ; Lancaster circuit, Thomas Buck and Benjamin Becker ; York circuit, John C. Reisner and Joseph M. Saylor ; Franklin and Berkley circuit, Philip Wagner and Frederick Borauf.

Salem district, Jacob Barber, P. E.; Union circuit, John W. Miller and George Reich ; Center circuit, Jacob Foy and Daniel Mannwiller ; Somerset circuit, Abraham Becker and John Hamilton ; Lake circuit, to be served by the local preachers, Christian Wolf and Frederick Glasser.

Ohio district, Adam Kleinfelter, P. E.; Lancaster circuit, Joseph Long and George Schneider ; Mansfield circuit, John Dehoff ; Canton circuit, Henry Wissler.

The membership now numbered 2039, an increase over the previous year of 161. A great many more members were received during the past Conference year, but owing to great losses which remain unexplained the Association remained small in numbers.

During this year the work increased chiefly on Schuylkill, Lancaster, York and Somerset circuits. The other fields were either increasing but slowly, or else decreasing, which was particularly the case with the three western circuits in Ohio. The former hindrances to the spread of the work had not yet been fully removed, but generally matters took a better turn.

Conference ordered that an edition of 1,000 copies of the small hymn-book called "*Die Geistliche Viole*" with an addition of eight hymns be published.

"For several years the annual small salary of the ministers had been about the same, and yet no special efforts were made to increase it. It appears as if the brethren considered it neither prudent nor expedient, to say much on this subject in public, nor to explain and enforce the duty of liberality to the members in private ; although the many locations that occurred every year, plainly demonstrated to them and to every one the insufficiency of their support. How was it possible, that a man, on whom devolved the support of a family, could, for any length of time, live on a salary of from \$35 to \$40 annually, unless he had other means of support ? This, however, was not frequently the case, nor is it so to-day. Although the Gospel expressly says, that a laborer is worthy of his hire, and that he who preaches the Gospel, shall also live by it ; yet these men were com-

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\*) *Life of Bishop Seybert*, pp. 93-94.

pelled to earn their living in some other way. *It should be remarked, however, that during those years when the preachers' salary had sunk to the freezing point, the monetary affairs of the country were in a very unsettled condition, and that provisions were then very cheap, so that one dollar would go as far as two or three had done before or did again afterward. Hence the support was, after all, as good in those days as it was afterward; with this difference, that preachers who had traveled five years or more, did subsequently draw twice the amount, that single itinerants received for their support.\**

#### § 149. The Chief Cause of Small Salaries.

At last there appears in the above extract a slight indication of the chief cause why the salaries of the preachers were so small during those years of trial and still a few years after. It is but just toward our people of those times to remark once more that since the close of the wars in America and Europe (in 1815) an unexampled financial and commercial crisis depressed everything for the space of at least 10 years, of which the fathers often spoke in later years. The best representations of the great misery, we find in the speeches of the Hon. Henry Clay, Speaker of the House of Representatives, in the Congress of 1823-24, and Col. Thomas H. Benton of Missouri. Mr. Clay said among other things: "The general distress which pervades the whole country is forced upon us by numerous facts of the most incontestable character. It is indicated by the diminished exports of native produce; by the depressed and reduced state of our foreign navigation; by our diminished commerce; by successive unthreshed crops of grain perishing in our barns for want of a market; by the alarming diminution of the circulating medium; by a universal complaint of the want of employment and a consequent reduction of the wages of labor; \* \* \* and above all, by the low and depressed state of the value of almost every description of property in the nation, which has, on an average, sunk not less than about fifty per cent. within a few years. \* \* \* It is most painful to me to dwell on the gloom of this picture. But I have exaggerated nothing. Perfect fidelity to the original would have authorized me to throw on deeper and darker hues."

Mr. Benton spoke as follows:—"No price for property or produce. No sales but those of the sheriff and the marshal. No purchasers at execution sales but the creditor, or some hoarder of money. No employment for industry—no demand for labor—no sale for the products of the farm—no sound of the hammer, but that of the auctioneer knocking down property. Stop laws—property laws—replevin laws—stay laws—loan office laws, the intervention of the Legislature between the creditor and the debtor—this was the business of the Legislatures in three-fourths of the States of the

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\*) Orwig's *History of the Evangelical Association*, pp. 128.

Union. \* \* \* No medium of exchange but depreciated paper, no change even, but little bits of foul paper, marked so many cents and signed by some tradesman, barber or inn-keeper, exchanges deranged to the extent of fifty or one hundred per cent. Distress, the universal cry of the people. Relief, the universal demand, thundered at the doors of all Legislatures, State and Federal ! ”

Is it any wonder then that those modest brethren of the Evangelical Association did not venture to say much concerning their support under such a long-continued extreme depression of all kinds of business and commerce ? The fact is there was scarcely any money in circulation and business was nearly stopped. Gold and silver mines had not as yet been discovered in the United States, and the young nation was dependent upon Mexico, Peru and other South American States for hard money. Banks were but few in existence and their paper mostly below par or worthless. But as produce was *very* cheap, and preachers wore mostly home-made clothes and were boarded free among the friends, their salary of \$30-\$40 in money amounted practically to perhaps three times as much as those sums indicate.

#### § 150. The Annual and General Conferences Held Jointly.

In the year 1826 the Annual and General Conference were again held jointly in New Berlin, Pa., beginning on the 5th of June. The previous session had been held in the year 1820 and thus the sessions of these two General Conferences were held six years apart. At that time there was no regular time fixed for the General Conference. It convened when circumstances and Church affairs seemed to demand a session.

John Seybert was elected President, and John C. Reisner appointed Secretary of this Conference.

William W. Orwig furnishes the following report of the main points of the transactions of this General Conference :—

“ 1. Resolved, That hereafter an Annual Conference of local preachers be held on every presiding elder district, in order to inquire into the conduct and doctrine of every local preacher. These Conferences were always to be held shortly before the Annual Conference, and an exact report of their minutes was to be laid before the latter body. But it appears, that these Conferences were never generally introduced, as it was scarcely practical to bring all the local preachers of a presiding elder district together annually. Afterward these Conferences were ordered to be held on every circuit, and this has been the practice to this day.\*

“ 2. The formation of the second Annual Conference of the itinerancy out of the Ohio presiding elder district. The great distance of that district

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\*) In later years they were discontinued.

from the places where the Annual Conference usually met, and the inconvenience to its preachers, of taking so long and expensive a journey, in order to attend the sessions, were some of the principal reasons for forming a new Conference there. This Conference was then called the "*Western Conference*," and the former the "*Eastern*" which names they retained until the formation of three Conferences in 1839. As the new Conference numbered at first but few itinerants, whom the "Eastern Conference" was still required partly to furnish, it remained for years in a state of dependency on the latter body, transmitting through a delegate a copy of its annual minutes for revision, at the same time drawing an amount of funds from the older Conference, which enabled it to place its members on an equal financial basis with the members of the old Conference.\* Not until 1836 was the dependency of the "Western Conference" discontinued, with regard to its minutes, and not before 1839, with regard to its funds. In all other respects, the Western Conference had all the rights and privileges of an annual Conference, conformably to the Discipline in those days. It kept a record of its minutes, although the Eastern Conference recorded them also. During the period of its dependency, the new Conference always held its annual session one month prior to that of the parent body, so that its minutes might be prepared and laid before that body in due time.

"3. A resolution that on every circuit, wherever practicable, a parsonage be built or bought, by voluntary contributions.—This had been recommended once or twice before, but the former resolutions, as well as the present, remained unheeded. Of late years this recommendation has been repeated and carried out to some extent, but up to this day much remains to be done in this matter. In consequence of the want of proper residences for itinerants having families, they were often compelled to hire houses that were either too *large* or too *small*; sometimes only a few rooms, and at times they could not get even these. This was the principal reason why some of the preachers, who were able to do so, purchased residences, thus hoping to escape the difficulty in question; but instead of succeeding, they frequently only increased their inconvenience, as they could not always receive their appointments near their respective homes, so that they were subjected to a

\* That it was necessary to render assistance to this feeble Conference which was situated in a wilderness among fresh settlers, is very evident from their first annual account of 1827 as it stands in the Conference journal:

"The total contributions were reported as follows:

	Contributions.	Traveling expenses.
Joseph Long.....	\$16.56.....	\$2.29
Francis Hoffman.....	12.74.....	5.17
Conrad Kring.....	32.43.....	3.27
Joseph M. Saylor.....	32.58.....	5.19
Jacob Frey.....	4.75.....	4.39
Adam Kleinfelter.....	13.50.....	6.60

N. B. Each one kept what he had received."

great loss of time, by going to and coming from their fields of labor. Moreover, the work itself was made to suffer by this cause, as preachers with families, in order to favor them, were often not sent to places where their talents were more particularly required. On several districts, some were changed for years in succession on a few circuits, which were close by their homes, till in some cases they had been three, four times, and even oftener, on the same circuit,—an arrangement with which the members were not always pleased."

#### § 151. Transactions of the Annual Conference

The business of this *nineteenth* session of the Annual Conference was transacted in the usual order.

Jacob Foy located on account of feeble health; John Dehoff, Frederick Borauf and Benjamin Becker on account of family affairs.

Francis Hoffman and Samuel Tobias were received on trial into the itinerancy. Henry Wissler, Daniel Mannwiller and Michael Hassler were ordained as deacons; Philip Wagner, John C. Reisner and Joseph Long as elders.

The stationing of the preachers resulted as follows:

Canaan district, John Seybert, P. E.; Schuylkill circuit, Thomas Buck and George Schneider; Lancaster circuit, John W. Miller; York circuit, Abraham Becker and James Brewer; Franklin and Berkley circuit, Daniel Mannwiller and John Hamilton.

Salem district, Jacob Barber, P. E.; Union circuit, John C. Reisner; Center circuit, Philip Wagner and Samuel Tobias; Somerset circuit, Henry Wissler, George Reich and Jacob Frey; Lake circuit, John Erly.

Ohio district, Adam Kleinfelter, P. E.; Lancaster circuit, Conrad Kring and Joseph M. Saylor; Mansfield and Canton circuit, Joseph Long and Francis Hoffmann.

The membership now amounted to 2207, the increase was 168. The preachers salary was \$38.46.

This also had been a highly blessed year, and most of the circuits had increased considerably, with the exception of Center, Somerset, and Lake circuits, and some of those in Ohio. In the preceding Conference year, John Seybert, presiding elder, explored Mahantango and Lykens Valley, and sought out the first preaching places there; and in this year he secured some in Deep Creek Valley also, where he formed a class shortly afterward. These and the surrounding valleys were, at that time, generally in a very dark and deplorable moral condition; and the work of grace met at first with great opposition, but extending more and more, it finally effected a general reformation among the inhabitants.—Since that time many a flourishing class has been formed in these valleys, and many a new church erected. Darkness has since, to a great extent, given way, and the morality of the people has risen to a higher standard.

During this year, old Union circuit also revived in some places and extended its boundaries somewhat, after it had, as it were, been checked or even retrograded for some years. In the preceding Conference year, the Brethren John W. Miller and George Reich had already found openings in Hartley and West Buffalo townships, which had resulted from the glorious revival in Orwigsburg some years before, and their preaching made deep impressions on many, some of whom were awakened and enlightened. But in this year they were brought to a decision by the powerful preaching of John C. Reisner, and quite a number were brought into the liberty of the children of God, and a considerable class was formed. Amongst the families there, who first received the preachers, and joined the Evangelical Association, were those of A. and G. Orwig, and that of J. Brickley, sen. and jr., and some others soon after. William W. Orwig, too, was among the first of the redeemed of the Lord in that neighborhood.—Afterward the work of grace extended still farther, and furnished three itinerant and two local preachers, besides a considerable number of useful laymen, many of whom have since died triumphantly in the Lord. Also in some other parts of the circuit awakenings took place.

#### § 152. Formation of the First Class in Lebanon, Pa.

During this year the first class of the Society at Lebanon, Pa., was formed by John Seybert. This town and vicinity had formerly been very corrupt and ungodly. All kinds of sins and vices were the order of the day, with few exceptions, both among professors and non-professors of religion; the preachers as well as the members of the Churches were worldly-minded, living in a state of impenitency, after the fashion of this world. Two years previous to the formation of the first class there, a considerable revival had taken place, of which Felix Licht, a Mennonite preacher, Philip Breidenstein, and his son John, were the principal instruments. Many were roused out of their lethargy, and began to inquire earnestly for the way of salvation. For some years they kept aloof from all Christian denominations, having been warned most emphatically against uniting with any of them by certain preachers, who were known as *Liberty men*, *Universals*, etc.

But finally some of them discovered, that without an organization, and the introduction of a good Church Discipline, the work could not possibly flourish for any considerable length of time, and therefore expressed a desire to unite with one of the Christian denominations. But others protesting violently against it, no one ventured to take the initiatory step, till John Seybert made the attempt and formed a class of 12 members, who elected Henry Fisher as their leader. The members of this class were: Henry Fisher, George Reinoehl and wife, Henry Bauman and wife, John Marland and wife, David Fisher, Elias Stoevers, Jacob Borkert, Barbara Riegel, and Frenica Licht.—Subsequently this class increased from time to time, gain-

ing a firmer footing and has existed to this day. Among the first there, who had received the Evangelical preachers, were Abraham Licht, sen., and George Reinöchl. The former was a Mennonite, a man of considerable property and influence; and, though he never united with the Society, yet he was its friend, and the preachers always found a pleasant home under his roof. He lived at a small distance from town; George Reinöchl lived in town. In 1830, the first church of the Society there was built, and consecrated on the 26th of September. Henry Niebel preached the dedicatory sermon from Ps. 93, 5., speaking  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours with great perspicuity and effect.\* From this time the work progressed rapidly, and extended more and more.

John Vandersall, formerly an itinerant, and John Schneider, a local preacher, finished their earthly career in the Lord, during this year. Both had been pious and useful men in the Church.

### § 153. Two Conferences.

In the year 1827 *two Annual Conference Sessions* were held for the *first time* in the Evangelical Association, viz., the "*Eastern*" and the "*Western*," and this was continued annually until the division of the work into three Conferences.†

The Western Conference began its first session May 5th, 1827, in the house of Henry Rauch, Wayne Co., Ohio. Adam Kleinfelter was elected Chairman, and Joseph Long appointed Secretary. Six itinerant and seven local preachers, who had previously traveled, were present. The new Conference already numbered ten elders, four deacons, and ten probationers, making a sum total of twenty-four, most of whom however, had emigrated from Pennsylvania. The membership numbered 523. Conrad Kring was ordained as elder, and Joseph M. Saylor as deacon. Conference elected no

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\*) It is said that during the erection of this church edifice, several of the laborers made sport of the conversions that would probably take place in this church. One of the hands, who was somewhat blunt, did not relish this sort of joking, and endeavored to stop it by exclaiming in his own uncouth manner: "And I will be—if I am not the first one who will be converted in this church!" But soon his conscience smote him on account of this oath and he began to fear that the damnation which he had pronounced upon himself, would come upon him if he did not repent. He could rest no more, and the result was, that he was one of the first who called upon God for mercy in that church.

†) In order to a correct historical understanding of our Conference history, this is the proper place to remark that the "Eastern" Conference substantially remained what had been the first or original Conference. The "Western" Conference was formed of what had been the Ohio district, which was in fact the *missionary field* of the original Conference and was geographically situated at a distance from it. Very properly the "Eastern" Conference could, in this sense, be called the oldest Conference until the change made in 1839. The "Western" was sometimes, in common parlance, called the "new" Conference.

presiding elder this year, but resolved that Joseph Long should attend the quarterly meetings during the Fall, and Adam Kleinfelter during the Spring, instead of a presiding elder. Joseph M. Saylor and Francis Hoffman went to the Eastern Conference, taking with them a copy of the minutes of the Western Conference and remained thereafter in connection with the Eastern Conference.

As the Eastern Conference, for a number of years, continued to send some of its preachers to the Western, it seems best to give the stationing of the preachers together.

This year the Eastern Conference held its annual session at Orwigsburg, Pa., in the new church (which was erected during the year), beginning on June 4th. Jacob Barber was elected president, and John C. Reisner appointed secretary. Michael Hassler was deposed from office for misconduct and Benjamin Becker located on account of failing health. George Mattinger, George Enders, and William Stoll were received on trial; George Reich, John Hamilton and Daniel Focht were ordained deacons, and Thomas Buck and John W. Miller, elders. Philip Wagner was elected presiding elder. The preachers were stationed as follows:

Canaan district, John Seybert, P. E.; Schuylkill circuit, John C. Reisner and Henry Wissler; Lancaster circuit, Joseph M. Saylor and William Stoll; York circuit, Thomas Buck and James Brewer; Franklin and Berkeley circuit, John Hamilton and Francis Hoffman.

Salem district, Philip Wagner, P. E.; Union circuit, Benjamin Ettinger and George Mattinger; Center circuit, Jacob Barber and George Schneider; Somerset circuit, Daniel Mannwiller, Samuel Tobias and J. Allen.

Western Conference district. The Conference consisting of but one presiding elder district had no officer of this kind during the year. The fields of labor were assigned to the preachers as follows: Canton circuit, Joseph Long; Wooster circuit, Conrad Kring; Sandusky circuit, Adam Kleinfelter; Lancaster circuit, John M. Miller and George Enders. The last two had come from the Eastern Conference.

The membership amounted to 2,567, the increase consequently to 360. This was the greatest increase of any year up to this time. The salary of an itinerant amounted to \$43.44. During this Conference year, however, matters were, on the whole quite unpromising. The Western Conference numbered at the close of the year 22 members less than it had at the beginning, and in the Eastern Conference also some circuits lost in point of numbers, others scarcely held their own, and only on Schuylkill, Lancaster, Somerset, and especially Center considerable progress was made. On the last named circuit a very blessed and victorious camp-meeting was held during the year, on the land of John A. Hennig, at the eastern end of Penn's Valley, where a considerable number of persons were awakened and converted. Also in George's Valley, and other parts of the circuit conversions took place. The increase on that circuit during the year was between

60 and 70, although the number of new converts was considerably larger. On Schuylkill circuit, especially at Orwigsburg, the work continued to prosper.

At this point Bro. Orwig has the following pertinent observations, which we insert with hearty approval :—

“The minutes of the Conferences, show that some of the preachers, who were for many years in the itinerancy, never reported a large increase, but often a decrease of membership, on their fields of labor, at the Annual Conferences. Among that number were frequently such as were considered great preachers, although the majority, as far as the writer is able to judge, were not entitled to that name. Others again had considerable revivals almost every year on their fields, and extended them by obtaining new preaching places and members; and those were often of the middle class of preachers, as far as talents and eloquence were concerned. Judging from these facts, it would seem that in order to prosecute the work of God successfully, and to be instrumental in awakening and converting many souls, more depends on God's grace and the unction of the Holy Ghost, and the earnestness, faith, and activity of the preacher, than on his natural gifts and talents. Especially much seems to depend on a preacher's making it his aim and object, to exert every power, to win as many souls as possible for the kingdom of God, and to preach the Gospel in every place; or in other words, if he knows and feels the importance and responsibility of his calling and the worth of immortal souls, so as to deny this vain world and himself, and consecrates himself entirely to God and his work, devoting all his time and strength to the discharge of his duties. In this way one sometimes accomplishes more in one year, than others all their lifetime. Especially has this proved true with regard to the Evangelical preachers, from the beginning of the Association, and appears more evident every year. Those who had the unction from on High, were industrious and active, always labored with good success, and were permitted to see glorious results of their labors; while the powerless, indolent, and indifferent, never effected much at any time or place, no matter what were their gifts and talents; and the writer is grieved to say, that the Association has had such individuals as preachers in its connection almost from the beginning.”

#### § 154. Excellent Measures Adopted.

The Western Conference met at Uniontown, Stark County, Ohio, May 5th, 1828. Joseph Long was Chairman, and John W. Miller Secretary. One preacher was expelled from the Church for immoral conduct, and Frederick Shower received again as deacon. As most of the preachers intended to go to the Eastern Conference, and as there were no new candidates for the ministry, no preachers were stationed by this Conference which only required that Joseph Long should act as much as possible in the capacity of presiding elder for the district. The stationing

of the preachers was then left to the Eastern Conference, merely on two conditions, viz., that Adam Kleinfelter be received as a member of the Conference committee, and that at least three ordained preachers be stationed on the district ; which conditions were readily complied with by the Eastern Conference.

The Eastern Conference held its session again at New Berlin, beginning June 2nd. John Seybert was Chairman, and John C. Reisner Secretary. In examining the preachers, J. Allen and W. Stoll were deposed from the ministry. John C. Reisner and Jos. M. Saylor located on account of enfeebled health, and Benjamin Ettinger on account of family circumstances. William W. Orwig, John H. Yambert, Elias Stoever, and Jacob Hoock, were received on trial into the itinerancy. Francis Hoffman and John G. Conser were ordained as deacons, and Daniel Mannwiller and James Brewer as elders, and Thomas Buck was chosen presiding elder. The preachers were stationed as follows :—

Canaan district, John Seybert, presiding elder. Schuylkill circuit, Adam Kleinfelter and John W. Miller ; Lancaster circuit, Conrad Kring ; York circuit, John Hamilton and John H. Yambert ; Franklin and Berkley circuit, George Reich and John Hoock.

Salem district, Thomas Buck, presiding elder. Union circuit, Francis Hoffman and George Enders ; Center circuit, Jacob Barber and William W. Orwig ; Somerset circuit, Jacob Brewer and George Mattinger ; Lake circuit, P. Wagner.

Western Conference district, Joseph Long, presiding elder. Canton circuit, Daniel Mannwiller and Samuel Tobias ; Lancaster circuit, Henry Wissler and Elias Stoever ; Sandusky circuit, George Schneider.

The membership amounted to 2,677, which shows an increase of only 110 during the previous year ; the salary of the preachers was \$41.76.

The Conference resolved, that hereafter married preachers having traveled five years or longer, shall draw as much salary for their families as for themselves, or in other words, as much again as a single itinerant ; and it was enjoined on them, at the same time, to exert themselves to increase the contributions toward the support of the ministers.

These two enactments were of great importance to the itinerancy of the Society, and contributed a great deal to its increase and strength. During the last twelve years, since 1816, the itinerancy had gained but one preacher in point of numbers, and during the last eight years none at all. In 1816, the number of itinerants was 21, in 1820 22, and in 1828 likewise 22. During this period, the work had, geographically, increased but little, although somewhat in point of numbers. But from this period, evidently a change for the better took place. Only three years afterward, the Association numbered 34 itinerants, and 3580 members, an increase of 12 preachers and 903 members in three years ; while in eight years from 1820

to 1828, the number of itinerants had remained the same, and the increase of the membership had been but 685. We are, indeed, not prepared to attribute this better success exclusively to the better support of the ministers ; yet we doubt not, that this measure met with the approbation of the Most High, and caused His richest blessings to rest upon the work. Under this new arrangement, those of the married preachers, who lived very economically and met with no accidents and losses, were at least enabled to get on without involving themselves in debts, or sacrificing their private property, if they had any ; for the salary soon increased somewhat ; the preachers frequently received presents, and provisions were very cheap in those days. But yet, not all succeeded so well ; and hence still many were compelled to follow some secular business in connection with their high calling, in order to procure a livelihood. This, however, proved detrimental to them in the discharge of their duties ; for, it not only took up that portion of their time, which they should have devoted to reading and study, but it also frequently gave offence to some. Others, again, desired to mend matters by locating for one or two years ; but these one or two years frequently grew into five or ten, while others clung to their secular employment all their lives long, so that they never again made their appearance in the itinerancy. This circumstance has ever been a great impediment to the Association, both with regard to its spread, and the increase of its itinerancy. But on the other hand, it can scarcely be denied either, that many left the field and returned to the world, not so much for want of an adequate support, as for a spirit of worldliness, a want of faith and the spirit of self-denial. Thus it happened, that some would preach a year or two, and then locate ; and so on to the end of their lives ; accomplishing, in this way, but little either in the world or in the kingdom of God. Those, on the contrary, who esteemed their honorable and important calling higher than all honors and conveniences of this world ; who, under all trials, manfully persevered in self-denial, fidelity, and activity, and, like St. Paul, suffered not poverty, want, hunger, or nakedness, either to hinder them from the discharge of their duties much less to drive them from the field, these fared best, on the whole, and secured the greatest renown. Another disastrous consequence was, that they were unable to purchase proper libraries, to foster that spirit of reading and research, so indispensably necessary to the minister of the Gospel, in order to store his mind with useful information, and to enable him at all times to bring forth things new and old. In consequence of this inadequate support, it was in earlier days not a rare occurrence, that our itinerants had, besides the Bible, Hymn-Book, and Discipline, scarcely a few dollars' worth of good books ; and, as some of these were, nevertheless, generally able to preach at least powerfully, others seemed to have imbibed the notion, that a preacher's reading and study were of little or no importance to him, provided he prayed diligently and earnestly for divine grace ; forgetting that one may do this, without being necessitated to

neglect the other ; and likewise forgetting, that ministers, whose minds are well stored with useful information, are not only the most acceptable, but also the most useful and efficient servants of God.

The unmarried ministers who, besides their horses, were kept by the friends the whole year, without charge, did not feel the effects of the meager support so keenly, and for this reason would sometimes generously distribute their salary among their more indigent brethren, being satisfied with food and clothing. Under these circumstances, but few preachers were able to set their societies an example with regard to liberality, although many of them contributed largely in proportion to their means, and even beyond them, to the support of every good cause ; especially since the building of churches has become more general in the connection, and the missionary cause has received its due share of attention. With very few exceptions, there is perhaps no other body of clergymen to be found in Christendom, who contribute more liberally in proportion to means and circumstances, than the itinerants of the Evangelical Association,—though some of them are very poor, yet they generally give freely. — Many improvements, however, have since been made in the arrangements of the Association, so that at present the support of the preachers is generally such that scarcely any need leave the field for want of support.\*

#### § 155. Progress of the Western Conference.

During the current year the small Western Conference made excellent progress ; she received 147 new members, while the Eastern had much less increase. The work spread extensively on Canton circuit, which was being traveled by Daniel Mannwiller and Samuel Tobias. Among the documents collected by John Dreisbach we find the following report :—

“The preachers entered on their large field of labor in humble reliance on the help of God, with the resolution to labor for His glory and the welfare of their fellow-men, and, if possible, to bring about a better state of things on the circuit, as not a few of the members were in a state of lukewarmness. Hence they began to denounce that cold formality in public worship, and to exhort the membership to fulfill their duties zealously, and to be diligently engaged in every good work. Mannwiller is said to have once made use of the following expression : ‘*By the help of God, I am determined, if possible, to bring the circuit into a better state.*’ Thus they continued preaching the word of God faithfully and in its purity, till the camp-meeting was held on Bro. J. Hegerman’s land, in Wayne Co., Ohio, where God’s grace was so powerfully manifested, that a glorious revival of religion took place. The excitement was uncommonly great. One evening during an exhortation, almost the whole assembly was deeply moved, and penitent sinners came from all directions to seek in prayer the forgiveness

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\*) Orwig’s *History*, etc., pp. 137, 141.

of their sins ; and there was such a flame of sacred love kindled in all Christian hearts, but lately so lukewarm, that from that moment to its close, the meeting was remarkably blessed. The holy fire then spread over the whole circuit, and the consequence was that the meetings everywhere became interesting, and many a precious soul was hopefully converted to God. Among these subjects of converting grace, was John Roesner, who afterward became an itinerant, and as a faithful servant has since entered into the joy of his Lord."

On the other circuits of this district the brethren also labored with great success during the year ; also on several circuits of the Eastern Conference, especially those of Schuylkill, Lancaster and York. At the close of the year Schuylkill circuit numbered 473 members and had in point of numbers reached its climax. In the following year a considerable part of Schuylkill circuit was cut off and added to a new circuit. Lancaster and York almost equaled Schuylkill in numbers. These three circuits together numbered over two hundred members more than all the other circuits of the Eastern Conference together.

Bro. John Stambach who had formerly been an itinerant, closed his earthly career during this year. He was a pious, humble man, and his ministerial labors were greatly blessed. Also Bro. Jacob Kleinfelter, local preacher, died during the year.

#### § 156. One of the Most Blessed Years.

The Western Conference held its session in the year 1829 in Tuscarawas township, Stark Co., Ohio, beginning on the 4th of May. Joseph Long was elected Chairman and Henry Wissler appointed Secretary. John George Zinser was received on probation into the itinerancy, and George Schneider, Samuel Tobias and Elias Stoever were ordained as deacons.

The Eastern Conference began its session on the 1st of June, 1829, at New Berlin, Pa. Thomas Buck was elected Chairman, and John Seybert appointed Secretary. Two preachers were deposed from office and one of them expelled from the Church. John W. Miller located. George Brickley, Joseph Ebert, Solomon G. Miller, Jacob Schnerr and William Ray were received on trial by Conference. Henry Niebel re-entered the itinerancy at this Conference. The preachers were stationed as follows :

##### EASTERN CONFERENCE.

Canaan district, Thomas Buck, P. E. Schuylkill circuit, Conrad Kring and Joseph Ebert ; Lebanon circuit, Henry Niebel and William W. Orwig ; Lancaster circuit, Joseph M. Saylor and George Enders ; York circuit, Daniel Mannwiller and Samuel Tobias ; Franklin and Berkley circuit, John Hamilton, James Brewer and William Ray.

Salem district, John Seybert, P. E. Union circuit, Jacob Barber and John G. Zinser ; Center circuit, Francis Hoffman and Solomon G. Miller ;

Somerset circuit, Henry Wissler and George Brickley; Lake circuit, George Reich.

#### WESTERN CONFERENCE.

Joseph Long, P. E. Canton circuit, Adam Kleinfelter and Elias Stoever; Lancaster circuit, John H. Yambert and George Schneider; Sandusky circuit, George Mattinger.

The membership this year was 2862, consequently an increase of 185 during the previous year. The number of itinerants was now 26 and the salary amounted to \$42.18. This year the married preachers for the first time drew salaries for their families *i. e.* Those who had traveled five years, besides their traveling expenses, but among the 22 itinerants of the past year there were but four entitled to draw for their families, nearly all the rest being single.

At this Conference a new circuit was formed called Lebanon out of parts of Schuylkill and Lancaster circuits, comprising to some extent those parts where Albright had been brought up, where had been formed the first societies of the Evangelical Association, and extending northward and westward beyond the town of Lebanon. This circuit prospered remarkably well, outstripping in a few years all other circuits in point of numbers, and was afterwards divided into several circuits.

At this Conference Thomas Buck was elected trustee or treasurer of all the proceeds from the book trade of the Association, and John Seybert trustee of all the legacies that might be bequeathed to the same. Some property had already been bequeathed to the Association and there have been other persons since who have devised considerable sums to it for the support of poor superannuated itinerants and of the preachers who fall short of their salaries.

This was again one of the most blessed years for the Association. All the circuits reported considerable increase at the next Conference, especially Lebanon, Center, and Berkley in the Eastern, and those of Canton and Lancaster in the Western Conference.

#### § 157. Beginning of the Awakening in Upper Milford, Lehigh County, Pa.

About this time a revival in Upper Milford, Lehigh County began, which afterward extended gloriously, proving a great blessing to many souls.

Among the families in that vicinity who first received our preachers and joined the connection, were GEORGE YEAKEL, DAVID SCHUBERT, PETER WIEST and DANIEL WIEAND, and near Millerstown (now Macungie) JOHN HITTEL. At Hittel's there had been preaching already the year before,\* but in that part of the country where the work princi-

\* The sainted Bro. HENRY STETZEL reports the following concerning Bro. John Hittel, and certain private meetings held in his house. He says: "The work which Rev. Jacob Albright had commenced in this neighborhood, in later years suffered a

pally began, the first sermon was preached by Rev. William W. Orwig, accompanied by Rev. Charles Hammer (both then young men) in the barn of David Schubert, on Sunday afternoon September 13th, 1829, which made a deep impression on many of the hearers. After the impressive sermon by Bro. Orwig, an exhortation was given by Bro. Hammer. An eye-witness reported the following: "The barn-floor was crowded with people, among whom were some serious persons. To the people generally it appeared, however, very strange to hold worship in a *barn*. Most of them kept their hats on and conducted themselves as if a public sale was to take place, until Bro. Orwig called their attention to the fact that this place was now to be a house of God where divine worship was to be held, and that it was therefore very improper for them to keep their hats on, whereupon most of them took them off. The wife of David Schubert was strongly opposed to this coming there of the preachers; she opposed them strenuously and even threatened to pour boiling water upon them; however, she did not execute this threat, but was soon afterward converted and died happy in the Lord." CHRISTOPHER SCHUBERT who had formerly attended the private meetings at Hittel's, now also opened his house for the preachers and the work began to be established.

On the 15th of November, 1829, there was preaching for the first time in the house of George Yeakel,\* and the work of conversion

temporary suspension, but there were still some people left who had light and clung to the truth, but from fear of the terrible persecution said very little about it. About one mile from the present Schubert's meeting house lived a man named JOHN HITTEL, where the Evangelical preachers found entertainment and lodging. The brethren Charles Bissey, John Kleinfelter and others frequently visited him. He was a noble man, somewhat timid and retired in his demeanor; so long as he lived there he did not permit any preaching in his house for fear of persecution. During the years 1825 to 1827 he became more courageous and invited such friends whom he knew to be favorable to the cause, to meet privately in his house when the preachers stopped there over night. At these gatherings they conversed concerning the work of the Lord and prayed together. Those invited were DAVID SCHUBERT, CHRISTOPHER SCHUBERT, PETER WIEST, and GEORGE YEAKEL. Both of the Schuberts and George Yeakel were *Schwenkfelders*. On one occasion a venerable man, MELCHIOR YEAKEL, was also invited, who also was a *Schwenkfelder*. He had heard Albright preach in 1796-1800, walked in the way of the light, and like Simeon waited for the salvation of God. The good old man was not able to return home that night and stayed at Hittel's. Next day some persons saw him coming from Hittel's and soon spread the dreadful news(!) that he had stayed with John Hittel who entertained the "Straweler-Pfaffen!" This old man afterward gave his *Schwenkfelder* brethren the good advice to cease from censuring and persecuting "these people," saying: "If this work is of God, it will make headway, but if it be not of God it will come to naught." These private gatherings were continued until 1828 when Hittel moved three miles away to Millerstown. From that time on there was preaching in his house. The brethren Adam Kleinfelter and John W. Miller made the beginning there."

\*) George Yeakel now opened his house for preaching, which came to pass in this wise. Bro. Orwig one day journeyed from "Liesser's Class" near Boyertown, Berks

began to spread, but with this opposition and persecution also arose. A fine class was formed during the year, and at its close a great many people were awakened and convinced and joined the Church. This part of the country lies nearly in the center of the first three classes, formed by Albright and not far from the place where he was born and brought up. It seems therefore very proper that considerable attention be given to the work in this vicinity, and the more so because very interesting events occurred in connection with the progress of the good movement in those parts.

In the townships of Heidelberg and Lower Heidelberg in Berks Co., the work also progressed, especially in the neighborhood of Womelsdorf and surroundings, and also in Lebanon.

On Center circuit the work was extended, especially in Penn's and Brush Valleys. Many people became awakened and were born into the Kingdom of God.

On Canton circuit, in the Western Conference, the work spread considerably, especially at Greensburg, Summit Co., Ohio. A considerable number of people were awakened and converted at a camp-meeting on the land of Bro. Kreutz. Several of these converts afterwards became preachers. The other circuits of the Western Conference were also extended during the year and this Conference gained a firm footing. At this time it also received a considerable increase from Pennsylvania, many members emigrating from that state into Ohio. During the year, the preacher in

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Co., Pa., to "Walter's Class," near Quakertown, Bucks Co., Pa., and his way led by George Yeakel's house in the so-called Hosensack in Lehigh Co. It so happened that Orwig and Yeakel met outside the latter's house, and he invited Orwig to come into the house, have his horse fed, and take dinner with the family, which invitation was accepted. In the course of conversation, which soon entered upon the domain of religion, Mr. Yeakel invited the preacher to stop with him whenever he came that way, and soon afterward also permitted him to preach in his house. This place was in settlement of Schwenkfelders to whom George Yeakel also belonged. Some of these Schwenkfelders also came to the meetings in his house. Among them was also the aforementioned Melchior Yeakel, who clearly saw and deplored the spiritual declension of that body and freely expressed his opinion that the despised Evangelical preachers were servants of the living God who preached the word in its purity. This aged father was, as it were, a patriarch among his brethren, having survived the previous generation, and although he was not a minister he frequently arose in their meetings and gave free expression to the truth. The author of this history saw this patriarch at the time when he was 88 years of age, and his grand, tall person made an indelible impression upon him. At a visit which Bro. Orwig made to this venerable man, he put a *golden eagle* (\$20) into Orwig's hand, with the remark, "I think you can make use of this." Bro. Orwig took this coin to Conference and placed it with the other money upon the conference table—for at that time the contributions were "general" and had to be divided at Conference—where the preachers looked at it with much curiosity. Many had never seen such a piece of gold, and such a gift by one man to the general contribution was something never heard of before.

charge of Lancaster circuit Rev. John H. Yambert, made the first visit to the south-western part of Ohio, whither a number of old members of the Church had immigrated from Pennsylvania, who expressed a strong desire to be regularly visited by our preachers. Although the prospects were then not specially promising, with regard to the extension of the work in that section, yet it kept on spreading until it extended into the counties of Montgomery, Warren, Butler, Preble, and at last over Miami and Darke, as far as Wayne County in the State of Indiana, till a circuit was formed there.

During this year Rev. *Henry Meyer*, a local preacher died. He was one of the first members on Somerset circuit, Pa.

#### § 158. Conversion of Absalom B. Schaefer.

During this year a man was converted to God who became in time a leading minister and pioneer preacher in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. His conversion is very interesting and sheds so much light upon the nature and manner of conversion in those years that an extract from his diary concerning it, will be of great value—as follows :

In the year 1839 Absalom B. Schaefer was appointed overseer of a section of the Ohio canal, which was then being dug. Rev. George Schneider had been sent from Pennsylvania to Lancaster (Ohio) circuit and came into the vicinity where Schaefer was engaged, and made an appointment on a Saturday afternoon near the home of a relative of Schaefer in a school-house. Mr. Schaefer resolved to attend, and brought an acquaintance with him. Meanwhile he had been seriously reflecting upon his own sinful life. When the time for the meeting came Schaefer walked through the forest. Approaching the school-house he suddenly espied the preacher in the crown of a fallen tree on his knees engaged in earnest prayer. He noticed the tears ran down the cheeks of the earnest suppliant, and quietly went past the tree toward the school-house. "But what a quaking came upon me," he says, "when I saw this man on his knees ; I cannot describe it ; I was at once fully convinced that he was a man of God !" In the school-house he found but few people ; Schaefer proposed to postpone the meeting until evening, for he would meanwhile make efforts to bring the people in. This proposition found favor, and Schaefer succeeded in bringing together a large audience. He had been so deeply affected when he saw the preacher on his knees that he could not cease thinking of it while he was inviting the people. Bro. Schneider preached on Acts 19, 20 : "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." The word had its effect upon him. "I was so powerfully affected," says Schaefer, "that I could not refrain from weeping and the stanza came into my mind : 'Ach, was hab ich angerichtet !' (Oh, what have I done !) I was so deeply touched that the preacher noticed it and came to me at the close of the meeting to talk to me." This sermon was one of great awakening power. Schaefer now resolved—"if there is mercy yet in heaven for me, I will seek it." Next evening he heard this preacher

again at a place six miles away. He soon experienced opposition and various conflicts, for he was in bad company among the canal-diggers. About this time he fell into a ditch 20 feet deep one dark night, and was hurt so seriously that he was confined to bed for many weeks. Afterward he secured an appointment as school teacher. Meanwhile he sank deeper into distress, concerning his soul's salvation. This change proved to be very fortunate for him. Two of the school directors were members of the Ev. Association—one of them was *John Bright*. He now began to number the sins he had committed until he could reckon no more—they appeared to him mountain-high. Almost despairing he still prayed and cried for mercy, resolving to *perish while praying* if it could not be otherwise. He read much in the Bible and prayed also in secret, but it seemed as if only the threatenings of the word were meant for him—doubts and unbelief tormented him. "In this manner," he says, "I continued until Sunday, October 25th, 1829—a day never to be forgotten. In the evening of that day, Bro. John H. Yambert had an appointment in the house of John Bright, and I went thither. In the morning I had read Ezekiel 18, 21, 22, 23, by which I obtained a faint hope, and during the day I was out in the woods praying most of the time. The burden of my sins became still more oppressive. When I came to the meeting the preacher arose and remarked that he had already preached twice that day and as there seemed to be mostly members of the Church present he would hold a class-meeting. This did not please me because I was hungry for the Word of God, but as the preacher now related his experience very touchingly it wrought a change in me; the beginning of his experience in seeking religion was very much like my own. All fear of man had now vanished and I wished to reveal my condition, but he next requested my friend John Bright to tell his experience, who then spoke with such deep feeling and earnestness that it deeply touched my heart. Now I wished very much the preacher would call on me. Scarcely had I conceived the thought, when he turned to me saying, 'Friend Schaefer, how is it with you?' But now I was not able to give an answer, I broke out in weeping and could only stammer that I was a great sinner, and that they should pray for me—down I went upon my knees and cried mightily to God for mercy. I cannot tell *what* or *how* I prayed or what occurred while I was on my knees but the friends prayed earnestly for me. After I had been on my knees for about two hours agonizing and struggling in prayer, *God for Christ's sake spoke peace to my soul!* The great peace and heavenly joy I then realized tongue cannot express. I experienced that although sin had abounded, grace did much more abound. O, what a great salvation! I now believed that all men could be saved."

On account of this conversion a great commotion arose among the people, for Schaefer had a large acquaintance and also many relatives in the community. He was persecuted, but this did not deter him. He then related his conversion to his pupils, and exhorted them to give their hearts

to the Saviour, prayed with them and held prayer-meetings in the school-house in the evenings, which resulted in the conversion of most of them during that Winter. The noon hours were spent in reading the Bible and in secret prayer. He says :

“ Deep snow fell during the Winter, but the pupils frequently went out into the forest and knelt down in the deep snow to pray. One could not go into any direction without seeing the marks made by their knees in the snow ! I often went out to pray, but I met so many pupils engaged in prayer, that I had to pass them for quite a distance. Oh that was a precious time for me ! ”

Bro Schaefer soon felt divinely called to go forth and call sinners to repentance, and later on he became a successful preacher, presiding elder, and a pioneer in the western work. God gave him many spiritual children ; his memory is blessed.

### § 159. Progress, Persecution, and Victories.

The Western Conference held its session in the year 1830, in Plain Township, Stark County, Ohio, beginning on the 3rd of May. Joseph Long was elected Chairman, and Adam Kleinfelter appointed Secretary—the latter located on account of feeble health. Absalom B. Schaefer and Christopher Aubel were received as local preachers, and William Roehrig as itinerant on trial. Louis Hanky and Michael Kibler were ordained as deacons.

The Eastern Conference held its session at Orwigsburg, Pa., beginning on the 1st of June. Thomas Buck was elected Chairman and John Seybert appointed Secretary. One itinerant and two local preachers were deposed from office. John Hamilton, Henry Wissler, Joseph M. Saylor, Francis Hoffman and Joseph Ebert located. Charles Hammer, Daniel Kehr, John S. Himmelreich and Robert G. Hunter were received on trial into the itinerancy. The preachers were stationed as follows .—

Canaan district, Thomas Buck, P. E. Schuylkill circuit, Elias Stoever and John G. Zinser ; Lebanon circuit, William W. Orwig and Charles Hammer ; Lancaster circuit, Henry Niebel and Jacob Schnerr ; York circuit, George Brickley and James Brewer ; Franklin circuit, Conrad Kring and Robert G. Hunter ; Berkley circuit, William Ray.

Salem district, John Seybert, P. E. Union circuit, George Schneider and Samuel Tobias ; Center circuit, Jacob Barber ; Somerset circuit, Solomon G. Miller and William Roehrig ; Lake circuit, Frederick Glasser.

Western Conference, Joseph Long, P. E. Canton circuit, John H. Yambert and Daniel Kehr ; Lancaster circuit, George Mattinger and John S. Himmelreich ; Sandusky circuit. George Enders.

The number of members reported at these Conferences was 3,245, an increase of 383. This was the greatest increase of any year up to that time, but as the number of the newly received members was 720 the Church must

have either lost 337 members or those who changed their residences must have been counted as new members, which latter seems more probable than that so many should have been lost in one year by expulsion or withdrawal. But the Discipline was rigidly enforced in those days and not only many members, but also a number of preachers were expelled almost every year. Nor can it be denied that then and afterward offenders were often dealt with too severely—with more patience and forbearance some members and preachers might have been saved and been of valuable service to the Church.

The salary of the preachers this year was but six cents higher than the year before ; but Conference passed a very rigid resolution with reference to the increase of the contributions toward the support of the preachers. It had often been the case, that preachers had not collected that amount of contributions, which they might and ought to have collected, had they discharged their duties faithfully in every respect ; and as they were entitled, according to the system at that time, which put all the preachers on an equal footing with regard to salary, to draw equal shares with those who had been more faithful, Conference resolved, that those preachers who, by neglect of this duty, did not collect that amount of contributions, which, in the opinion of Conference, they might have raised, should suffer a diminution of their salaries. This neglect of duty on the part of some, was one of the principal reasons afterward urged against the system of equality, with regard to the salary of the preachers.

It was contended, that those who either from indifference or from an unwillingness to bear the cross, neglected to raise their proportion of contributions, should suffer the consequences themselves, and not their faithful brethren. This and the fact that in some parts of the country provisions cost much more than in others, led to changing this rule so as to make the Conferences independent of each other, with regard to contributions ; which change, however, was highly disapproved and deplored by some of the older preachers. For these and similar reasons, most of the Conferences subsequently made their circuits and stations independent of each other, in reference to the support of the preachers ; with the exception, however, that those who fell short of their due, shall be assisted by raising a general collection for them at the close of each Conference year, and out of the avails of the Printing Establishment, and by the "Charitable Society" of the Association, as far as practicable.

The Eastern Conference, as the older of the two Conferences, being authorized by the discipline to do so, resolved that a General Conference be held, to begin on the first Monday of November following.\*

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\*) The second edition of the discipline (1816-17) for the first time contained the clause referring to the "oldest Conference" being authorized to appoint time and place for the next session of the General Conference in case there should be no bishop present at the General Conference. There was no bishop now, and hence this was the

This year was, on the whole, another very prosperous one. Most of the circuits were blessed with awakenings and conversions, some more than usual, especially those of Union, Lebanon and Somerset in the Eastern, and that of Canton in the Western Conference. The awakening that had begun the previous year in Upper Milford, on Lebanon circuit, made rapid progress, and more and more hearts and doors were opened to the truth. But opposition and persecution increased proportionately also. Hitherto the enemies of truth and light had flattered themselves with the hope that the work would either not last long, or at least not spread very widely; but now seeing themselves disappointed in their expectations, they commenced to oppose it in earnest, at first with calumnies and slanders, then by violence and force. It is true, those who had recourse to violence, were but the outcasts of society; but being assisted and encouraged by some of the most respectable nominal Christians, and by some clergymen in the neighborhood, they became so bold, that only by the intervention of the law, they could be restrained from carrying their wicked designs into effect. They had frequently disturbed the services by being noisy, and by other acts of frivolity; but now they broke one up. On the 16th of November, 1830, there was evening service in the house of Peter Wiest, but the preaching was disturbed several times by a crowd of ruffians, and finally the whole service was stopped. After several ineffectual attempts to restore order, the friends found themselves compelled to surrender the house to the mob, and to suffer them to act out their wantonness. A scene now followed which beggars all description; for about two hours these monsters raged, cursed, swore, and threatened without intermission, in the house; howling, singing, and leaping all the while, so that as many demoniacs could scarcely have acted worse—nearly all the benches of the house were broken and knocked to pieces. After they were prosecuted and fined, tranquillity was restored for some time, and the work spread more rapidly.\* At the close of this conference year, a great num-

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duty of the Eastern Conference which, as between the two—the Eastern and Western—was considered the older one. This relation existed until 1839, when the Eastern was divided *through the middle*, the eastern half being then called “East Pennsylvania Conference,” and the western half “West Pennsylvania Conference.” There were now not only these two new names, but two new organizations and two new conference records commenced with the year 1840. The Eastern Conference then ceased in every aspect of the case, and in every sense of the word. Two new Conferences thenceforth occupied her territory and embraced her membership—about equally divided between them.

\*) Bro. Orwig was the preacher at this meeting and he also was the plaintiff at the court. During the trial the truth came clearly to light. Several of the defendants testified that Bro. Orwig had in his preaching condemned all men and all Churches who did not belong to his sect, and this alleged fact the defense attempted to use as an apology for the breaking up of the meeting. But the cross-examination and the testimony on the side of the prosecution demolished these false assertions entirely. During

ber of the inhabitants were awakened, and about 50 professed to have experienced a change of heart and to have found peace with God.\*

During this year, Bro. John Seybert, who was then presiding elder of Salem district, found open doors in Blooming Grove, Lycoming County, Pa.; also in Blockhouse Settlement, Tioga County. In Williamsport a family named Rothrock had before this received our preachers, and afterward Henry Hartmann opened his house also for them, and with his wife joined the Church. For a number of years the congregation remained small, but afterward increasing somewhat when they built a convenient little church.

In Blooming Grove there was great opposition, Bro. Seybert being looked upon as a magician; in order to get rid of his magic, a number of certificates of baptism and a German copy of the New Testament, which

these proceedings many allusions were made to *Orwig's doctrine*; which created a desire among the attorneys, judges, and many of the most respected inhabitants of Allentown to hear him preach a sermon in order to become acquainted with "his doctrine". He was then urged to preach, but he at first declined, stating as a reason that the excitement was already very great so that the multitude that would come together could not well be kept in order. The High Constable, as this police officer was then called, however declared that he would provide the place for the meeting and keep the people in order. He secured a very large room on the second story of a large building. He then appointed deputy constables and notified the towns-people, accompanied with very emphatic expressions, that whosoever would disturb the meeting would fare badly. "The multitude came together"—high and low—and the constables kept perfect order. Bro. Orwig preached with great freedom—young as he was—on the words of the Lord: "Ye must be born again." (John 3, 7.), and the Word made a powerful impression upon the attentive audience.

The defendants were found guilty and were both fined and jailed. At the close of the trial, one Jacob Heil, who had been the ringleader, said aloud to Bro. Orwig, in Pennsylvania German: "Well, Orwig, du hoscht's doch gewunne!" ("Well, Orwig, you have gained it anyhow.")

\*) The two young preachers, Revds. William W. Orwig and Charles Hammer, were united in the work like David and Jonathan, of which Bro. Hammer speaks as follows:

"We were closely bound together to carry on the work of the Lord, and the rage of the enemy could not alarm us. We spent much of our time in fervent prayer and the reading of the word of God upon our knees. This we often did in the forest, especially in the Summer season, and when we had no suitable room in which to read and study. It was then the custom of many of the preachers to read the word of God upon their knees, especially when looking for a text and thus also meditating upon their sermon. I knew one of our old preachers (Henry Niebel) who entered the ministry in 1809 who bore the marks of much kneeling upon his knees and took them to his grave. The chief aim was to preach the word of the cross with divine unction. A sermon might be ever so well arranged and finished—it would not be acceptable with the people when devoid of the influence of the Holy Spirit. And this unction is still necessary in our time and day, and is the chief requirement in the fitting out of an Evangelical preacher, in order to administer the sacred office of the Gospel ministry successfully." (*Chr. Botschafter*, August 11th, 1884, p. 6.)

had been bought of him, were burned. But in later times our preachers gained a firm footing there; many assented to the truth, and a good society was formed, which has been in a prosperous condition ever since.

In Blockhouse settlement Samuel Hartmann was the first who received Bro. Seybert into his house, and permitted him to preach there. This section of country was at that time very bad, in a moral point of view; vices of all kinds, especially that of drunkenness, were the order of the day. The people indeed had churches and preachers, but the latter were like the people—*godless*.—Seybert's preaching soon caused a great stir in the neighborhood; sinners were awakened and converted, houses and churches were opened to him, and persecution arose against the work. He paid several visits to this neighborhood during this and the following conference year, founded a flourishing society, which he added to the circuit, and thus laid the foundation of a very good and lasting work, that has been progressing to this day. The first families that fell in with the movement, were those of Hartmann, Koegel, Sindlinger, Knodel, Dier, Essig, Welti, Schick, Schambacher, Rupp, Glöckler, Landis, Deibler, and others. Afterward several families removed to other parts of the country, where they received the preachers of the Church; others exerted a salutary influence on their friends and relatives, who lived scattered about; and thus Blockhouse settlement became a renowned place in the Evangelical Association, although it is somewhat remote, and the country rather rough and wild.

In this year, Bro. Daniel Mannwiller closed his earthly career, after having served six years as an itinerant with very good success.

#### § 160. Important Transactions of the Fourth General Conference.

The General Conference which was appointed by the previous Eastern Conference went into session on the 1st day of November, 1830, in the house of *John Adam Hennig* in Hains township, Center Co., Pa., in the eastern part of Penn's Valley. As heretofore, every elder had the right to attend and participate in the transactions of the Conference, but only eight preachers who had the right to vote attended, namely, John Dreisbach, Henry Niebel, John Seybert, Jacob Barber, Joseph Long, Thomas Buck, Conrad Kring, and Henry Hassler. Joseph Long was elected Chairman, and John Seybert appointed Secretary. William W. Orwig says that he and other preachers also attended but had no right to participate in the proceedings.

He recollected right well in 1887 what difficulties the brethren encountered in the effort to revise the Articles of Faith and the Discipline of the Church—this was, in fact, the chief object why this Conference was called, because a new edition of the Discipline was to be issued, and then to be translated into the English language. As, however, the revisions were not

recorded in the conference journal, we insert the following report furnished by Bishop Long :

"1. *The Articles of Faith.* The first article had already been changed in 1816, and the expression, '*three persons*' changed into, '*a trinity.*' The articles 2, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 18, were changed as follows : In the 2nd article for : 'In order thus to reconcile the Father to us,' the words : 'In order to reconcile the *justice of the eternal Father* to us.' In the articles 12, 13, 14 and 15, the words, '*sacrament*' and '*sacraments*' were erased, and the following substituted, '*Baptism, Lord's Supper, means of Grace, representation,*' etc., and thus a whole sentence in the 14th article was dropped, viz., 'that only *two sacraments* have been instituted by Christ.'

"2. The General Rules and Instructions in the Duties of this Association, were changed and considerably abbreviated, as they are at present.

"3. The tenure of the bishops was so restricted, that they were eligible only for two terms of four years each in succession. Formerly they had always been eligible, and this was afterward made the rule again. The formula for the ordination of bishops was dropped.

"4. It was ordained by this body, that hereafter only itinerants shall be members of the Annual Conferences, as at present ; before this, local preachers also had been members. The power of the bishops to station the preachers, was likewise annulled, and it was ordained that the bishop, in connection with two elders to be elected by Conference for this purpose, shall attend to this business.\*

"5. Among the duties of the preachers in charge, the following changes were made, viz.: 1. With regard to class-meetings, that it be left to their discretion, to admit or exclude persons who are no members of the Society. 2. The following order to receive new members was laid down : 'Let them be addressed as follows : 'Art thou,' etc.

"6. The duties of the presiding elders were so changed, that each of them became the sole book agent of his district, thus dropping the body of book agents on every district.

"7. The *responses* in the form of ordaining elders were somewhat abbreviated, and the word '*sacrament*' left out. The forms of baptism for infants and of solemnizing matrimony, were also changed.

"8. The word *deacon* was changed into *minister*; and the articles against antinomianism and on the final perseverance of the saints, were left out.

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\*) Bishop Long reported these items to Mr. Orwig, from memory, which, however, misled him in this instance. For it was already ordered by General Conference in 1816, and incorporated into the Discipline published in 1817, that the bishop shall station the preachers with the assistance of two elders. (See Discipline of 1817).

- In later years this was changed so that the bishop "with the assistance of the presiding elders" shall station the preachers.

"These," says Bro. Long, "are the principal changes of the Articles of Faith and the Discipline of the Church, that were made by the General Conference of 1830, as far as I can remember."

John Seybert and Thomas Buck were appointed a committee, to prepare the improved and altered Articles of Faith and Discipline for the press; and John Dreisbach and Henry Niebel were added to the committee, to examine the whole thoroughly before publication. Adam Ettinger and John Dreisbach were appointed to examine the English translation of the discipline.

As the Western Conference still was to a great extent dependent on the Eastern, General Conference ordained, that hereafter a presiding elder of the Western Conference attend annually the session of the Eastern Conference as a delegate, in order to bring the necessary documents from one Conference to the other, and to assist in transacting the mutual business of both. This arrangement was to last till the next General Conference.

Another important act of this Conference, must not be overlooked here. Some years before this Conference, several men had been received into the itinerant ministry, who preached exclusively in English, and hence could travel only on a few circuits, the others being nearly all German; and as fears were entertained, that the English language might prevail, this Conference ordained, that the itinerant ministry in general confine their labors to the German portion of the population, and that no more preachers be received into that body, who had not, at least, some knowledge of the German language.

This resolution vexed and discouraged the English brethren a great deal; and its consequence was, that the English work suffered and languished, till finally it died out almost entirely. Thus many parts of the country were and remained closed against the Association, as by far the most States of the Union were almost exclusively, and the few remaining for the most part, English. By a resolution of a later General Conference—that of 1843—this resolution was not only repealed, but Conference also ordained, that our Association shall hereafter labor both for the English and German portion of our population.\*

#### § 161. The Revision of the Articles of Faith.

The present rule prohibiting the change of the Articles of Faith did not exist in 1830, hence those eight fathers, assembled in General Conference, had the right in the absence of a statute or constitutional restriction to do as they did in revising those Articles, and their right has never been questioned. Their work in this respect seems to have been on the whole

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\*) Proceedings were signed by Jos. Long, John Seybert, Henry Hassler, Thos. Buck, Henry Niebel, Conrad Kring, James Barber, John Dreisbach.

wise and timely. Several Articles were contained in the creed in the first and second edition of the Discipline which seemed to be superfluous, as for instance: "On the Marriage of Preachers," "On the Oath of a Christian"—which were dropped. The rejection of the word *sacrament* was motivated chiefly by the fact that it is a Latin word ("*Sacramentum*") whose meaning is little understood by common people. According to its original meaning it is "the oath of unconditional obedience taken by the newly drafted soldier in Ancient Rome." Unconverted German Pennsylvanians, addicted to swearing, often used the word profanely.

The word "person" with reference to the Holy Trinity which was found in the first edition was omitted already in the second edition of the Discipline, because the Bible does not use it with regard to God, and its definition as "a self-consistent, free, rational being," as applied to man is not altogether applicable to a divine *trinity*. The "Trinity of the Godhead, of one substance and power and co-eternal" was considered properly and sufficiently expressive of the Holy Trinity, and this was held fast, not as being three attributes or a three-fold manifestation merely, but in the true biblical and protestant, orthodox sense of the word—*Trinity*!

The change in the second Article of the words: "In order thus to reconcile the Father to us", to: "In order to reconcile the *justice of the eternal Father* to us" seems to have been intended as an explication of the former version but there was nothing elucidated thereby, for the Scripture says: "God was in Christ, *reconciling* the world unto himself."

### § 162. Limitations of the Episcopacy.

The limitation of the eligibility of a bishop to two terms, the abolition of the ordination of a bishop, which had been inserted into the second edition of the Discipline in 1816, and the power of the bishop to station the preachers alone without the help of the presiding elders (which power Bishop Albright had)—and all of this at a time when the Association had no bishop—was largely caused by the influence of the long-continued and vehement agitation in the Methodist Episcopal Church against the almost unlimited power of their bishops, which resulted, in the year 1828, in the secession of a number of influential preachers and many members from that Church, and their organization into the "Methodist Protestant Church." Our fathers frequently came in contact with some of the leaders of that secession movement and read their special literature—some of which was exceedingly bitter—which made them very cautious, if not suspicious. The abolition of the ordination of a bishop was a wise step, but the limitation of the eligibility of a bishop to two terms was afterward found to have been unwise, and was rescinded. And the method of stationing was in course of time also re-arranged, so that the bishop has the primary power of stationing but the presiding elders are to *assist* him.

On the whole the authority of the bishop among us is balanced in such a manner that he could not be a "pope" even if he would, for his term of four years subjects him at every General Conference to a close scrutiny concerning his moral and official conduct, and in this respect makes his re-election a matter of uncertainty.

### § 163. The Chief Calling of the Association.

This General Conference held fast to the truth which governed the call of Rev. Jacob Albright, that the Gospel should be preached first to the Germans in its purity and power.\* Yet this call was never understood to be so limited as to exclude the English, just as little as the charge given by the Lord to his disciples to "begin at Jerusalem", and offer salvation first to the Jews excluded the Gentiles. "To the Jew first, but also to the Greek," was the order then, and with Albright and his successors it was: "The Germans first, but also the English." And the fact that the United Brethren in Christ had abandoned the German field to a large extent, and their Church underwent a transition into the English, reminded our fathers very impressively of their chief calling. And the painful fact that they had about this time very ill luck with several of their English preachers, also had a depressing effect upon the English work. Nevertheless this General Conference resolved that the Discipline be translated into the English language, thus proving conclusively that they were not inimical to the English language. Nor must it be forgotten that the leading men were all Americans of the second and third generation, and as such were not prejudiced against the English language. They evidently acted conscientiously in this matter, intending to follow what to them appeared the indications of Providence.

The Western Conference held its next session in Green Township, Stark County, O., beginning with the 2nd of May, 1831. Joseph Long was elected chairman, and he named John H. Yambert as secretary. A local preacher was deposed from the ministry and expelled from the Church. Michael Miller, Christian Leitner, and John Roessner were received into the itinerancy on probation. Conference now numbered nine itinerant ministers (of whom several went to the Eastern Conferences), 27 local preachers and 963 members.

The session of the Eastern Conference began on the 6th of June in the town of Lebanon, Pa. Thomas Buck was elected chairman and John Seybert appointed secretary. One itinerant and two local ministers were deposed from the ministry. John Hamilton also was deposed from the ministry because he had promulgated anti-scriptural doctrines. Samuel Tobias located. The following brethren were received into the itinerancy

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\*) The facts and reasons in connection with this have been fully presented on the foregoing pages.

on probation : Daniel Brickley, George Anstein, John P. Leib, William Wagner, Charles Hesser, Jacob Borkert, John Campbell, and Henry Fisher. Ordained as deacons : John G. Zinser, Solomon G. Miller, Jacob Schnerr, and William Ray ; and as elder Elias Stoever. Henry Niebel was elected presiding elder, and John Rank book-agent.

Canaan District, Henry Niebel, P. E.; Schuylkill Circuit, Jacob Schnerr, J. Young ; Lebanon Circuit, John G. Zinser, J. P. Leib ; Lancaster Circuit, Elias Stoever, Henry Fischer. Zion District, Thomas Buck, P. E.; York Circuit, William W. Orwig, Daniel Brickley, John Roessner ; Franklin Circuit, George Brickley, Jacob Borkert ; Berkley Circuit, George Enders ; Somerset Circuit, Conrad Kring, Benjamin Bixler, G. Anstein. Salem District, John Seybert, P. E.; Union Circuit, Joseph M. Saylor, Philip Wagner, Charles Hesser ; Lake Circuit, George Schneider, J. Campbell. Western Conference District, Joseph Long, P. E.; Canton and Wooster Circuits, George Mattinger, J. S. Himmelreich, M. Miller ; Sandusky Circuit, J. H. Yambert, Chr. Leitner ; New Lancaster Circuit, Solomon G. Miller, Daniel Kehr.

At this Conference a new Presiding Elder District was formed, called "Zion District," and, among other things, the following was adopted : 1st, That no preacher of the Association be allowed to have printed or published any kind of manuscript or manuscripts, unless the same were first examined and approved by his Conference ; and 2nd, That an extract of the "Life of George Miller," and a statement of his last sickness and his death be prepared by J. C. Reisner and examined and approved by T. Buck, H. Niebel and A. Ettinger, and be printed.

The first of these two resolutions was caused by the publishing and circulation of a pamphlet by J. Hamilton, which was also the reason for his removal from office, he refusing to acknowledge and revoke the error therein contained. — The membership at this Conference was 3580, and the increase during the past year 335. The yearly salary of a single preacher was \$55.68, and that of a married one twice as much, if he had served five years or more as an itinerant.

#### § 164. Conflicts and Victories in Upper Milford and Cedar Creek, Pa.

This was again a blessed year. Excepting Berkley and Franklin the circuits had a good increase, especially Lebanon, York, Center, Lake, Canton and Wooster. The awakening in Upper Milford increased in power and extent, and the number of the newly converted multiplied, but persecution also became more vehement, of which the following events, reported in the collections of historical information by Rev. Henry Stetzel furnish sufficient evidence :—

"In the conference year from May 1831 to May 1832 Bro. John G. Zinser intended to preach in the house of John Hittel, in Lehigh County, Pa. A small number of "praying people" gathered to hear the Word of God, and also some 70–80 persons outside to cause disturbance. Some of the disturbers managed to get into the house and caused a great turmoil by mocking, blasphemies and miscellaneous deviltry in which they were strongly assisted by the rum-bottle. Those on the outside began to rave and curse and yell like wild beasts. The mob yelled and cursed and acted

like madmen in the house and outside so that no worship could be held. The rabble now ran in and out and then united in stoning the windows and doors and pulling down the fences and breaking the doors and tearing the gates off the stable and barn. Only men possessed by devils are capable of such conduct. Pandemonium reigned. The few friends stood huddled together in a corner of the house where the stones could not hit them—no one could safely stay in the house nor come out of it to go home. This storm continued until late in the night, when some of the rioters left and the situation became more quiet. Bro. David Schubert with his daughter and a few others then made the attempt to escape and go home. They managed to escape silently out into the street but the rioters found them out and ran after them, threw stones at them, and insulted them with shameless aspersions and ugly epithets. A madman who rode a horse ran his beast upon them, in order to ride them down and, if possible, kill, them, but he did not succeed in this. He would ride ahead and hide in by-ways until these few helpless men and women had passed by and then he would try again to ride them down. This he attempted three times. Now the little flock left the road and made their way home over the fields and by-paths in the best manner they could, and, at last at about 3 o'clock in the morning they reached their home without the loss of limb or life. An aged sister—who was then a young lady—says: 'Yes, if God had not protected us we could not have gone through it.' Those were times that tried men's souls."\*)

The brethren John G. Zinser and John P. Leib also found an open door about this time at Cedar Creek near Allentown, where a respectable man named David Mertz received them and was soon thereafter converted to God with his family, joined the Church and exerted a wholesome influence upon that neighborhood. In a few years there was a glorious work in progress which spread far around.

Rev. Henry Stetzel furnishes the following valuable report of some of the details of this remarkable beginning:

"Cedar Creek is a stream of healthy, pure and fresh water arising from a powerful spring, and flowing easterly through a beautiful valley for about seven miles until it enters into the Little Lehigh near Allentown. This small valley with its clear stream of water, is one of the most beautiful spots in Pennsylvania. Here lived Father *Henry Mertz* with his family upon a large farm, and also his son *David*. The latter was superintendent of a woollen factory on the Cedar Creek. The place is four miles west of Allentown, where the infirmary of Lehigh County is now situated.

"In the year 1831 a young man named *Francis Gabel*, came to David Mertz to obtain employment in his factory. It was agreed that he should remain and his salary was fixed for one year, to begin with the month of April. This man Gabel had been converted in Upper Milford. After he had entered the Mertz home as a laborer, the conversation soon led to the subject of conversion and prayer at the table and in the family. David

Mertz thought that praying was all right and said that they also had prayed heretofore but admitted that it had been neglected—'got out of fashion.' Gabel then spoke with them about the assurance of the pardon of sin and adoption into God's family, whereby a man could enter into such a state of grace that he knew for himself that he was reconciled to God through the blood of Christ, and realized the witness of the Holy Spirit that he was a child of God. 'Through these conversations,' says David Mertz, 'he reached the door of our hearts.' Mertz's soon fell into a state of unrest and concern for their souls' salvation, and began to pray in secret for the pardon of sin and the renewal of the heart. Until then they had not yet heard a preacher of the Evangelical Association and did not desire, on account of the fierce persecution, to make their acquaintance.

"However, toward the close of the year they gave permission for an Evangelical preacher to preach in their house. Bro. Gabel then managed to secure the presence of Bro. Zinser, who preached to five persons, namely, David Mertz and wife, Father Henry Mertz, Francis Gabel and John Hittel, the latter having come with Bro. Zinser from Upper Milford. This then was the first sermon by an Evangelical preacher in this neighborhood—toward the close of the year 1831. But David Mertz and wife were seeking salvation until the Spring of 1832, when they found divine peace and joy in believing.

"On the 13th of March, 1832, John P. Leib preached in their house. His hearers were David Mertz and wife, Francis Gabel, Susan Sarber, Susan Mohr. These were all converted persons and were soon after formed into a class. Bro. Gabel was made class-leader and David Mertz exhorter. This was the first class of the Evangelical Association at Cedar Creek. Now Mertz's became a regular appointment, was added to the then Lebanon circuit and served by preachers of the Eastern Conference. This Conference had its annual session in June. The brethren Zinser and Leib were the preachers on this circuit from June 1831 till June 1832, hence this was for them a new appointment. From June 1832 till June 1833 the brethren Jacob Schnerr and John P. Leib served this field; the following year Jacob Schnerr and John Sensel, and from June 1834 till 1835 Joseph M. Saylor and Jacob Riegel.

"The opposition against the work was vehement, for the moral condition of the people was deplorable to the last degree. At their public gatherings, on drilling and election days, at shooting matches, auctions, etc., nearly everybody became intoxicated; brawls occurred; some were almost killed and others crippled for life. These gatherings usually ended in a so-called 'frolic' or dancing party. Swearing, drinking, carousing, foul conversation, where sobriety and propriety were forgotten, was the order of the day on such occasions. Sometimes in the harvest-field such as would not drink liquor were thrown to the ground and held fast while brandy was poured into their mouths, in order to show that all must drink whether they

were willing or not. Yet these were all Christians (?), for heathen there were none in the country !

"The pastors (?) of these people denounced the Evangelical preachers from the pulpits as seducers, false prophets, fanatical, dangerous men, and warned the people urgently not to go to any of their meetings, in order to be safe against seduction. The blinded people said all sorts of evil things against this handful of praying men and women, which evil-speaking has never been exceeded among the heathen. Absurdities that for shamelessness and nonsense could not be equalled were spread abroad against them. For these reasons very few people came to the meetings during the first two years. Even Father Mertz did not attend, still clinging to his own righteousness, although from the time when the brethren Schnerr and Leib came on the circuit there was regular preaching there. But after awhile he came into the light, found salvation in the blood of Christ and the assurance that he was a child of God. Great was his joy in God. He now opened his house for preaching. Almost instantly the spell of darkness was broken, and the people came in crowds to the meetings to hear the truth for themselves.

"Father Mertz was a sensible and peaceable man. He was known far and wide as '*General Mertz*' because he had been Brigadier General of a large division of the militia of the State.\* He was also elected representative to the legislature of the State and filled other civil offices. He was likewise one of the leading officials in the Lutheran Church. These offices he discharged with faithfulness and to general satisfaction. He was regarded as one of the best men in the State—until he was converted to God and admitted the Evangelical preachers into his house—then he was declared to be as bad as the other 'Strawelers' !

"Before Father Mertz had obtained salvation himself, his pastor (B. G.) required him to prohibit the preaching in the house of his son David, but to do this he could not persuade him. His pastor announced a special sermon, and after that a general disputation took place on this 'new way', and the 'Pfarrer' again demanded of Mertz that he should order these 'false preachers' away from his property. But Mertz replied: 'This I cannot do, for my son and his wife now lead a different and better life than before. You know,' he said to his pastor, 'that I have always opposed ungodliness, such as dancing, swearing, drinking, card playing, etc. These people also oppose these evil things and in that they are right.' This was a severe battle ; Father Mertz and his son David stood alone against the whole congregation with their pastor in front. But when Father Mertz coolly and squarely told his pastor that he suffered these sins to go unrebuked among his people and thus was himself responsible for the prevailing darkness, the 'Pfarrer's' powder caught fire, and beating the air with his hands he

\* ) One of his sons told the author that on review days General Mertz used to ride a white horse for which he had paid *six hundred dollars*.

exclaimed : 'I have always reprov'd sin and preached the true Gospel !' Sharply came the answer from Father Mertz 'No, you have never preached that the people could be saved from sin—which is the true Gospel !' So they went on for awhile. The greater part of the congregation declared they would not retain any fanatics in the Church. Father Mertz still attended services and his Church, waiting for a reformation. But later on, when he admitted preaching into his house, he severed his former Church connection."

On York circuit, at Canadochley, a glorious work of grace took place. Previously there were but few families there, and the population of that section was morally depraved. But now several influential families were converted, the work obtained a solid footing and afterward developed considerably. John G. and Henry Thomas and their families and the next year Henry Burg, John A. Jacobs and other families were found among the saved. At the close of the conference year a very blessed "big" meeting was held in Seitz's Church near Shrewsbury. It lasted from Friday evening until Sunday evening after midnight, during which time about 25 souls found peace through Christ.

On Center circuit, in Brush Valley, and especially southwest from Millheim in Penn's Valley many conversions took place, and the circuit increased considerably. In Nittaney Valley an extensive awakening took place at which the families Best, Braun and others were brought to Christ who afterwards became pillars in the Church.

On Lake circuit in New York, 160 members were received into the Church during the year. Bro. Solomon Weber reported that during the year George Schneider and John Campbell, who traveled Lake circuit, entered Erie County, N. Y., and found open doors in the neighborhood of Father Schopp and laid the ground for the formation of Buffalo circuit which was accomplished in the following year by Conrad Kring and Jacob Bell. Jacob Schopp, S. Fleischer, P. Schneider, and Joseph Reeser were among the first to receive the preachers. Joseph Reeser was the first class-leader on Buffalo circuit.

On Canton and Wooster circuit, in Ohio, 105 members were received during the year.

#### § 165. Difficulties and Divisions at Orwigsburg.

At Orwigsburg, on Schuylkill circuit, in the Eastern Conference, serious difficulties arose about this time. A process of purging had been inaugurated sometime previously. The great draughts a few years before had also brought some "bad fish" to land which had to be separated. Besides this, a few influential men arose among the members who proclaimed perverse doctrines and drew some unstable souls after themselves. The chief leader of the division was a man named George Kimmel, who was otherwise an honorable man, but very much inclined to new fangled notions and fanati-

cism. He was at the same time strongly self-willed. He deemed himself much wiser in spiritual things than all his brethren and would not take advice from any one, defying all who did not agree with him. His chief error consisted in a literal application of the washing of feet described in John 13. as being indispensably necessary to salvation. He condemned all who did not perform this ceremony in accordance with his exegesis, as being disobedient to God. The brethren bore with him patiently for a long time and sought to convince him of his error, but all efforts were in vain; he clung tenaciously to his opinion and sought to defend it at every opportunity and to induce as many as possible to coincide with him in his views. Finally he fell also into other errors, causing much disturbance among the members, so that he could no longer be retained in the Church.\*

#### § 166. Hamilton's Attempt and Failure.

John Hamilton who had been deposed from the ministry on account of erroneous doctrines by the last Conference also made a strong effort to create a division in the Church and had made calculations of great success. He pretended to re-establish the old "*Albright-ground*" and to found a Scriptural Church and not a sect. He actually appointed a Conference and expected that 12-18 preachers would attend—but when the time arrived he was *left alone*. In the beginning a few of the preachers seemed to be favorable to his views, but in the end they all left him. He was a talented and much beloved preacher. Sometime after this he joined the Lutheran Church.

Through this unfortunate circumstance the English work suffered immensely, so that it failed almost entirely, for Hamilton had been the leading man among the English brethren who at the beginning favored him to some extent but afterward differed from him and were scattered.

James Brewer, one of the old preachers, who could labor in both languages, favored Hamilton for awhile, but did not venture to go with him, and himself fell into errors and withdrew a few years afterward from the Evangelical Association. His chief error was, that an entirely sanctified person had nothing further to do in this world, and hence would be called into eternity at the moment he was made entirely holy. This doctrine he preached at a camp-meeting in the State of Virginia, in the year 1833, and when he was spoken to about it and at the same time complaints were lodged against him, he withdrew from the Church during that meeting and died soon afterward. It has been stated, however, that he humbled him-

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\*) A large portion of self-importance, self-conceit, and self-will and a setting up of non-essential side-issues as being all-important in religious matters, are the invariable characteristics of the fanatic. Selfishness is always at the bottom.

self and became reconciled before his end. It was hoped that he died in the Lord.\*

\*) It is of some historical interest to see what kind of constitution Mr. Hamilton and a few of the English preachers somewhat later adopted, as follows:—

We the undersigned, preachers of the Gospel, met on the 28th of September, 1833, and adopted the following resolutions, to wit:—

*Resolved*, That we will oppose all the evils with their causes, which arise from partisanship, both in Church and State, and adopt the following rules for the formation and establishing of Christian societies:—

1. That this Society shall be known as the Christian Church, and shall never be otherwise named.

2. Jesus Christ is the only Head.

3. Believers on Him and infant children are the only members.

4. The New Testament is the only rule of faith and practice.

5. In neutral matters each member shall have liberty to entertain his own views and also to discuss any subject, but in a disciplinary respect a strict conformity to the precepts of Christ is required.

6. Each congregation, wherever one may be organized under these rules, shall have power to receive members, elect officers, etc.

7. Delegates from the different Societies shall meet annually to deliberate on the general interests.

8. At every monthly meeting a collection shall be taken for the poor, and the promotion of the Gospel.

Following are some of the reasons why we cannot consistently join any of the existing sects:—

1. Because A. B. and C. are for Apollos, Paul and Cephas, and only one, D., is for Christ.

2. Because sectism is Babel which means confusion. The different sects do not understand each other now, hence we believe, that the day is dawning when the call shall be heard: "She is fallen, Babylon the Great, and Christ is all and in all."

3. Because the sects labor more for the extension of their boundaries and the spread of their peculiar doctrines than for the salvation of souls and the extension of the Kingdom of Christ.

4. Because they disagree among themselves with reference to doctrine and Church government.

5. Because it is a self-evident fact, that each sect believes that it is the only means whereby salvation is to come to the world.

6. Because the evils that spring from sectism have brought infidelity into the world and cause its present rapid spread.

7. Because we believe, in accordance with experience that if the sects possessed civil in connection with ecclesiastical power, they would still more persecute those who withdraw and differ from them.

8. Because the different sects are like Pilate and Herod who hated each other, but when they desired to persecute the innocent they became friendly to each other.

9. Because they divide the flock of Christ and thus nullify the object of the Gospel and of Christ.

10. Because we believe that the New Testament is sufficient for faith and Church government, which the sects do not believe, or else they would not substitute their creeds and disciplines instead.

The session of the Western Conference was again held in Green Township, Stark County, Ohio, beginning on the 7th of June, 1832. Joseph Long was elected president, and John H. Yambert appointed secretary. William Røhrig and J. D. were deposed from the ministry. John Lutz, Elias Sichly, David Poorman, Aaron Yambert, and John J. Kopp were received into the itinerancy on trial.

The Eastern Conference held its session at New Berlin, Pa., beginning June 4th. Thomas Buck was elected president, and he appointed John Seybert secretary. The examination of the preachers was this time unusually difficult, because many charges were preferred and ten preachers deposed from office, six for immoral conduct, three for not preaching and one because not qualified for the office. In addition to these, two more were put back on trial. It is however, evident that these ten were mostly if not all local preachers. This was, as heretofore remarked, a time of very strict government in the Church, and there is reason to believe that at times too little leniency was practiced. However it may have been for the best interest of the Church, for before this there had been considerable trouble with preachers of a loose character who did more harm than good. Thomas Buck, who was a man of great moral rigor, exerted a great influence over the ministry at this time, often controlling the brethren as he pleased. Many a brother who had been tempted or was wavering or overtaken by a fault, might have been saved by a little more patience and kindness. And yet this extreme degree of strictness is not so harmful as is the opposite extreme of lack of discipline which opens the door to every evil thing.

Henry Fischer, George Enders, James Brewer, and Benjamin Bixler located on account of failing health. The brethren Jacob Bell, Henry Bucks, Christian Thomas, Samuel Baumgartner, Daniel Fichtner, and Joseph Harlacher \* were received on trial into the itinerancy.

The districts and circuits were allotted to the preachers as follows :

Canaan district, Henry Niebel, P. E. Schuylkill circuit, William W.

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11. Because in heaven the question will never be asked : " To which sect do you belong ? "

Signed by

JOHN HAMILTON,  
ROBERT G. HUNTER,  
JAMES BREWER,  
JOHN DAWSON,  
HENRY DAWSON.

It is very remarkable that Hamilton and his co-signers did not see that they also by this very constitution established a new rule beside the New Testament and thus laid the foundation for a new sect. That their proceedings were sectarian, is evident from the fact that there was neither a divine call nor a necessity for it. The excellent discipline of the Evangelical Association was to them, as it seems, the " rock of offence."

\*) The brethren Bucks, Baumgartner and Harlacher became very successful preachers.

Orwig and Daniel Brickley ; Lebanon circuit, Jacob Schnerr and John P. Leib ; Lancaster circuit, George Brickley and Francis Hoffman.

Zion district, Thomas Buck, P. E. York circuit, John G. Zinser, J. Roessner and Henry Bucks ; Franklin circuit, Joseph M. Saylor and Jacob Borkert ; Shenandoah circuit, George Schneider and Christian Thomas ; Somersset circuit, Daniel Kehr and Joseph Harlacher ; Indiana circuit, Elias Stoever and Abraham Frey.

Salem district, John Seybert, P. E. Union circuit, Solomon G. Miller and Charles Hesser ; Center circuit, Philip Wagner and Samuel Baumgartner ; Lycoming circuit, Jacob Barber and J. Young ; Lake circuit, John S. Himmelreich and John Campbell ; Buffalo circuit, Conrad Kring and Jacob Bell.

#### WESTERN CONFERENCE.

Joseph Long, P. E. Canton circuit, George Anstein and Joann J. Kopp ; Wooster circuit, Charles Hammer and Christian Leitner ; Sandusky circuit, George Mattinger and Elias Sichley ; New Lancaster circuit, John H. Yambert and Michael Miller.

The membership now amounted to 3,921, which was an increase of 341 during the previous conference year. The salary of a single preacher was \$52.29.

#### § 167. The Charitable Fund, Etc.

This Conference resolved that a fund for the support of superannuated poor itinerants and the widows and orphans of deceased preachers should be established. For the management of such a fund, John Rank of Union County, Pa., was elected as trustee. This was the inception of the *Charitable Fund* of the Evangelical Association for which a Society was afterwards organized and incorporated.

It would appear from the records that but little was done in the book business at this time. The Conference ordered that 1500 copies of the "Biographies of Jacob Albright and George Miller," and 1000 copies of the Discipline (English) be published. These small editions show that the book trade was still in its infancy, but it is to be remembered that the English portion of the Church was quite small in numbers.

During the year the work made but indifferent progress, the increase being not quite as large as the year before, yet more uniform. York circuit reported the highest number of newly received members, and then came Wooster, Canton, and Center circuits. Schuylkill circuit had to pass through its severest trial, and a final separation of the two antagonistic elements took place. George Kimmel and his party, which was, however, but small in numbers, withdrew from the Church ; thus tranquility was restored and immediately the work began to prosper once more. A camp-meeting, which was held in August on the land of George Rickert near Orwigsburg is said

to have been the best ever held in that section of the country. It was estimated that at least one hundred souls were converted during the meeting. From that time the work gained a firmer footing and the societies in the neighborhood increased annually. Buffalo circuit in the State of New York was formed this year. There had been but one circuit in that State for many years, namely Lake circuit. The reading of the stationing report at Conference, caused special anxiety when it came to Lake circuit, and the faces of those appointed there usually changed color. This circuit was for a long time in no favorable repute among the preachers. One cause was its great distance from the other circuits. The preachers on that circuit missed the company of the other brethren during the whole year. Only the presiding elder made occasional, but not regular visits. By the formation of the Buffalo circuit this was changed, for now three or four preachers were sent. Thus the work was developed continually until some ten years later it was formed into an Annual Conference.

**§ 168. Reminiscences by Rev. Charles Hammer of His Experiences in the Western Conference.**

During this year Charles Hammer was sent from the Eastern to the Western Conference, and stationed on Wooster circuit, in Ohio, having Christian Leitner as his colleague. From documents found among his effects we gather the following interesting items :

"We endeavored during the year to extend our circuit, although it was already large enough for two itinerants, hence we arranged our appointments so that we could prospect for new appointments. In this we had good success. In Tuscarawas County, somewhat distant from our field of labor we had no preaching place. Bro. Adam Hennig had done missionary work, there already in 1816, but it was afterward dropped, probably on account of the great distance. But by a remarkable circumstance it now transpired that we found entrance into this county, and as that was the beginning which led to the formation of Tuscarawas circuit, I will relate it :

"Being on my way to visit relatives in that county a woman met me on the street who at once came up to me and after greeting me asked whether I were a preacher? She spoke somewhat broken English. I noticed at once by her appearance and pronunciation that she was a German Pennsylvanian and hence I answered her in German that I was an Evangelical preacher. When she heard that she was overjoyed and said, they had previously lived in Western Pennsylvania and the Evangelical preachers used to stop with them and preached in their house, but now that they lived in this new country they felt utterly forsaken without preaching, and they knew not where our preachers were, or how to reach them by correspondence. She further said that they had often prayed to God to so guide matters that they might obtain a preacher again. Then she said in

her Pennsylvanian dialect, which cannot be given here : 'When I left home I resolved that if I should meet some one who looked like a preacher, I would stop him and give him an invitation to visit us and preach for us. Now when I saw you, I thought you were a Methodist preacher and for that reason I spoke English.'

"I promised to visit them and appointed the time. These people could appreciate the preached Word after having been deprived of it for a long time. No one can describe the great joy in that house when she brought home the news that they were to have preaching in their house. This sister was the wife of David Ressler. I went there at the appointed time and preached for them and learned to know them as a genuine Evangelical family. Their house was a small old cabin. There was scarcely room to hold a service; they intended, however, to erect a new house during the coming year, which was done. At the first appointment a neighbor, whose name was Brenneisen, attended. He was a Mennonite; he was touched and such impressions were made upon him that he invited us at once to preach in his house (which was a roomy one), which invitation I of course accepted with thanks. From that time forward there was regular preaching service in that neighborhood with good results. Bro. Brenneisen and his family were converted to God before the year expired, and Bro. Ressler's children also later on. Their son Jacob Ressler afterward entered the itinerancy and served for some time as preacher in the Ohio Conference. A beautiful church was afterward erected and a flourishing congregation enjoyed the privileges of the house of God. The work went forward in several directions—and thus arose the Tuscarawas circuit.

"The boundaries of our circuit (Wooster) were extended in a north-westerly direction. We secured a new appointment a few miles east of where now the town West Salem is situated. I preached there for the first time on Sunday, October 28th, 1832. The house which was a roomy one, was crowded with eager hearers, some of whom had come quite a distance. These people had formerly lived in Schuylkill County, Pa., where they knew my father and transacted business with him, when they heard who was to preach the curiosity was great to hear me. But as yet they were all enemies of the work of God and very ignorant in regard to religious matters. One of them, a man of great physical strength, who was called 'Bully', I had known in my youth as having been conspicuous in many free fights—he had talked boastingly how he would deal with the preacher (me) and what a lesson he would give him after preaching was over. I preached on John 3. 7. about the new birth. God's power came upon the people so that a great commotion took place, and my special opponent was confounded; he sat there trembling like a leaf and wept so bitterly, that I expected he would drop on his knees and cry out for mercy and pardon. After the meeting these people invited me very urgently to come again, and also preach for them, which was done. We then received that neighborhood as

a new appointment, preaching regularly in private houses, and afterwards the good fruit appeared.

"Bro. John Riegel lived where West Salem is now located, in whose house we preached regularly. Bro. Riegel, now a local preacher, had been an itinerant preacher from 1816 till 1820. He was a pious, talented man and was a great blessing to his neighborhood where he exerted a very good influence. He was a very good help to me and gave me much encouragement, hence I felt quite at home with him. Also Bro. Frederick Borauf who had been an itinerant but was now a local minister, lived in this section. He was a pious man, but had to struggle with adversities which were more or less detrimental to his usefulness. He had been a very useful man while he was in the active service, and made a good impression as a preacher and also in his private life. He was suddenly taken into eternity by an accident which befel him in the woods. Bro. Adam Hennig also lived within five miles from there. He moved into this neighborhood when it was yet entirely new and thinly settled. They were surrounded in their little cabin with great forests. His wife frequently told me of the adventures she had while her husband was absent following his calling as a preacher of the Gospel. Wild beasts, especially wolves, came in crowds to their hut where she and her little children were alone, howling most frightfully. But she trusted in God who protected them, and seemed contented with her lot.

"At that time we had, besides quarterly and 'Big' meetings, also watch-nights; but of protracted meetings we knew nothing, and we could not have held them either because of our daily appointments. We expected usually at our watch-nights and other meetings to have soul-harvests in which we were seldom disappointed. I will here refer to a blessed watch-night held during this year, in the house of Father Mohr, six miles from where the town of Ashland is now located. This meeting was held in the second story of a large dwelling house where there was a large room without partitions. At such meetings it was customary to have the assistance of several experienced local preachers, who would sometimes come from a considerable distance but this time we were disappointed. Late in the afternoon, when the friends had already assembled from far and near, it was reported that none of those expected preachers would come. This disappointment was too much for the friends. Such a large gathering of people and only one preacher, this was so unusual that it caused lamentations. I could finally no longer bear the desponding utterances and withdrew from the people. I went out into the woods and prayed and agonized for divine help. My courage and faith became strengthened and I returned to the house and found the room crowded with people. After opening the meeting I read 1 Samuel 12, 24 as my text. But I will not attempt to describe what powerful and overwhelming divine power was revealed which swept everything before it. It was wonderful! I could hardly finish my sermon on

account of the great stir among the converted and unconverted. There was no further preaching necessary, there was enough to do in laboring with the penitent seekers. This was the Lord's doings, and unto him be all the glory. Now the lamentations were turned into songs of gladness and shouts of joy. How many were converted in that night, I cannot say as I find no number mentioned in my journal. It is now (1884) about 55 years since that meeting was held, but it remains as vividly in my memory as if it had happened but recently.

"In this section a certain physician resided, who disapproved of our doctrine and was disposed to enter into disputes with our preachers on certain points of doctrine. I preached in a certain house where this doctor was well known, and when he heard the name of the preacher he said: 'I will attend, but I will be the *hammer* and he shall be the *anvil*.' When the time arrived the house was filled with eager hearers, and the doctor also put in an appearance. Bro. H. who was class-leader and also a son-in-law of Father Christopher Spangler of Center County, Pa., came to me before the exercises began, and informed me of the doctor's presence, that he had spoken thus and thus, that he was a man who would carry out his determination, and that he feared the doctor would begin a debate in open meeting. Bro. H. then gave me a good advice how to reach the heart of this man through the sermon and thus keep him quiet. I followed this advice and our purpose was accomplished. At the close of the meeting he came to me, gave me his hand and spoke in a friendly manner—and hastened away. Outside the house he was asked why he was in such haste, whereupon he answered: 'It is true I have said, I would be the hammer and he should be the anvil, but *he is the hammer and I am the anvil*' I was very glad thus to have escaped an unseemly debate in the meeting. I hope the impressions made upon him in that meeting may have resulted in his salvation.

"The visits of our presiding elder Bro. Joseph Long were occasions of great blessing and encouragement. He was then in his best years, about 33 years old and had been 11 years in the ministry. He was probably never in better spirit to preach than at this time. He frequently preached at our quarterly and camp-meetings so powerfully that he carried everything before him. He had peculiar ways about him in his social conduct, which at times caused offence, but then his extraordinary preaching easily reconciled all. Once I heard him preach on Hebrews 2, 1-3. After the sermon he turned to me and said: 'Now I see into this text.' A few weeks later we had another meeting in another section of this circuit where he preached again on the same text, but this was a remarkable sermon; although I have heard many others preach on the same words I have never heard anything comparable to this. It seemed he had received special light on those words when he preached from them before.

"I would remark here that Bro. Long was very compassionate on preachers when they were sick or poor or overwhelmed with adversities.

As an illustration I cite the following instance: Bro. Long located the following year (1833), and before I left Ohio my horse became blind. Under these circumstances I came to his house. He inspected my horse, and then said: 'You cannot get along with this blind horse, leave it here and take my riding-horse instead.' But his horse was an excellent one and probably worth three times as much as mine, and to pay the difference there was no thought about that, in short the offer was too good, and I refused it with thanks."

"The present generation of Ohio preachers can have no adequate idea of how their fore-fathers had to deny themselves after they had come from Pennsylvania and settled in the thick forests of Ohio and struggled to establish a homestead here. I met families who would have speedily returned to Pennsylvania if it had not been for want of means, but as it was they were compelled to stay under great sorrow and adversities until they were established in some measure. Some of these families had all conveniences in their former homes, but now they fared poorly. Living in small huts, furnished with home-made tables, benches, etc., instead of chairs and bedsteads and everything else on a similar scale. Besides this, was the heavy work with clearing up and cultivating the soil until it was in a condition to yield the necessary provisions for living. Ofttimes snakes would gather under the floor of the cabin and make their breeding places there. I frequently preached in such a house, but had not courage to stay through the night until cold weather set in. The family had come from Lewisburg, Pa. On the afternoon of the 1st of August, 1832, I preached there the first time, when, in the midst of a sermon, a snake of considerable size came up through some hole in the floor and crawled along upon the floor. It may be that the singing or perhaps the preaching induced it to come out. It was soon killed but was followed by another which was also speedily dispatched. This took place during preaching but caused no disturbance. No one seemed frightened, apparently these people were accustomed to such visits. At the close of the meeting a stranger came to me who had been touched by the sermon, and invited me to preach also in his house, which was done. The snakes had evidently done no harm in any respect."<sup>4</sup>

#### § 169. Increased Activity—Vehement Persecution.

This year (1833) the Western Conference held its annual session in Pleasant township, Fairfield County, Ohio, beginning May 6th. Joseph Long was chairman, and John H. Yambert secretary. One minister was deposed from office for neglect of duty. George Anstein and Christian Leitner located on account of bodily infirmities, and Joseph Long on account of family affairs. Daniel Tobias, Peter Gates, John Shreffler and Henry M'Bride were received

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<sup>4</sup>) *Christliche Botschafter*, December 15-29, 1884.

on trial into the itinerancy.

The Eastern Conference held its session at Orwigsburg, Pa., beginning June 3rd. Thomas Buck was again chairman, and John Seybert secretary. Two preachers were deposed from the ministry, and John S. Himmelreich and Jacob Borkert located on account of bodily infirmities. The following were received on trial into the itinerancy : John Sensel, Isaac Deppen, Michael F. Maize, Solomon Altimos, Jacob Boas, and Daniel Miesse. The preachers were stationed as follows :—

Canaan district, Thomas Buck, P. E. Schuylkill circuit, John P. Leib and Isaac Deppen ; Lebanon circuit, Jacob Schnerr and John Sensel ; Lancaster circuit, John Rössner and John Lutz.

Zion district, William W. Orwig, P. E. York circuit, John G. Zinser and Joseph Harlacher ; Gettysburg circuit, Elias Stoever and Henry Bucks ; Franklin circuit, Jacob Barber and Samuel Baumgartner ; Shenandoah circuit, Jacob Bell and Michael F. Maize.

Salem district, Joseph M. Saylor, P. E. Union circuit, John C. Reisner and Francis Hoffman ; Lycoming circuit, George Schneider and George Brickley ; Center circuit, Charles Hesser and J. Young ; Somerset circuit, Daniel Brickley and Abraham Frey ; Indiana circuit, Solomon G. Miller and Jacob Boas.

Carmel district, Philip Wagner, P. E. Lake circuit, Daniel Kehr and Solomon Altimos ; Mohawk circuit, Frederick Glasser ; Buffalo circuit, John H. Yambert ; Erie circuit, John Seybert.

*Western Conference*, Henry Niebel, P. E. New Lancaster circuit, Charles Hammer and Elias Sichly ; Sandusky circuit, Michael Miller and Peter Gates ; Wooster circuit, John J. Kopp and Aaron Yambert ; Canton circuit, Conrad Kring and Daniel Tobias ; Miami circuit, George Mattinger and John Shreffler.

The increase during the past year was 331, and the whole membership 4252. The salary of an unmarried preacher was \$48.48.

This Conference resolved to publish an English hymn-book for the Society, and Joseph M. Saylor and John P. Leib were appointed a committee to make a collection, to which committee William W. Orwig, Adam Ettinger, and Joseph Hammer were added the following year, in order to revise and prepare said collection for the press. It consisted of 333 hymns, of small size; about ten years after it was considerably enlarged, and published in a larger size. It was likewise resolved, to revise the smaller German hymn-book. Thomas Buck, William W. Orwig, and John C. Reisner, were appointed a committee to carry this resolution into effect. The former editions of this small hymn-book had been in larger type and of larger size, but without any division of the hymns into their proper departments. By this revision some of the hymns were changed, shortened, divided into two or more, some left out, and a considerable number of new ones added, especially morning, evening, and funeral hymns. At a subsequent revision

and enlargement of this little volume, however, most of these hymns, with several others, were embodied into a larger hymn book, while some hymns of the larger work were added to the smaller one.

From the minutes of this Conference it appears, that four new circuits and a new presiding elder district were formed, and the boundaries of the connection considerably enlarged. For several years past, the number of itinerants had increased more rapidly than ever before; and as the several circuits were, therefore, better supplied and attended to than before, some had become so extensive by this time, that a division was necessary. There were also men at hand to seek new circuits, or to take up missions. The Society had recovered from its former sore trials, and taken a turn for increased activity in its high calling. The ministry embodied a considerable number of experienced, firm, and heroic men, who made it their business to enlarge the bounds of their fields of labor, and to enlist as many souls in the service of God, as they possibly could. Most of them, with few exceptions, preached daily. The circuits were generally very large; it required four, and on some even six weeks, to "make a round"; and many of the preaching places were ten, twenty, and some even thirty miles apart. Some of the circuits were from two to four hundred miles in circumference, and the districts accordingly. These, then, were signs of better times; nor did they fail to come.

This was one of the most blessed and prosperous years of the Association, and never before had the increase been so large. The brethren labored with remarkably good success on Lebanon circuit, which extended partly over the counties of Lebanon, Berks, Lehigh and Bucks, numbering over 500 members.

During this and the preceding year a great revival took place in Brush Valley, Center circuit, which resulted in the conversion of the families of Gramling, Beck, Moyer, and others; and in Nittany Valley, the families of Rissman, Heldman, etc.

Franklin circuit, extending over parts of the counties of Franklin, Cumberland, and Perry, enjoyed a glorious revival this year. A few miles east of Carlisle, at the Leathart Spring, a considerable awakening took place, and a very promising class was formed there. David Kutz, Christian Ruhl, John Kratzer, and partly their families also, were among the first members in this vicinity. Also in Fishingcreek Valley, Perry Co., awakenings and conversions took place.

As the work of conversion progressed in Upper Milford, Lehigh Co., persecution became more fierce. As an illustration of the vehemence of the conflicts between light and darkness we insert the following communication by Rev. Jesse Yeakel, who was an eye-witness of the occurrences he describes.

"During the years 1832 and 1833 a number of respectable families were converted to God under the labors of the sainted Rev. Jacob Schnerr,

all of whom had up to that time belonged to a certain church denomination. Filled with chagrin on this account, many of their fellow-members tormented them in many ways ; there was, however, little opportunity because men, women and children usually entered unitedly upon the new way. But with *one* family it was different, for these persecutors succeeded in causing friction between man and wife and induced the latter to oppose her husband (*Charles Yeakel*) and the work in the family. But as the husband for himself and on account of his children conscientiously sought the Lord and exhorted his children to turn to God, the said opponents with their pastor at the head urged the poor wife to forsake her home in the absence of her husband, and take the children with her, expecting thereby to compel him, in view of his temporal circumstances, to change his mind. The concentrated hatred on account of the loss of said families whom they could not reach, was now poured upon this one family. Almost driven to despair the wife one day left her home and took the children—mostly small as yet—except one of the eldest, with her. Now the enemies made application to the civil courts to compel the husband and father to provide for the absent wife and children, but in this they failed. Then they made application for a divorce, in which they also failed for no one could show that the husband had committed any wrong against her. Finally the enemies concluded to support the wife and children out of their Church treasury. Then a very able attorney advised the husband to enter suit for damages against the entire coterie on account of unlawful interference with his family. But this opened their eyes, so that they discovered a great danger for their good (?) name and their money purses. They begged for leniency which was finally granted to them upon conditions that were acceptable.

Meanwhile, the children grew up, returned home, and one after the other was converted to God, until *all* had found the Lord. After a number of years the mother also returned, acknowledged her wrong, became reconciled to her husband, sought the Lord and died years ago, as we hope, in the Lord. The husband, who preceded her several years, had suffered, besides sleepless nights and untold sorrows, also the loss of several thousands of dollars in the shape of court expenses, damage to his business, etc., in order to serve God in a *free* country, according to the dictates of his conscience. But his steadfastness bore such fruit, as he was permitted yet to see, as rewarded him a thousandfold. And he had the great satisfaction to see that two of his sons became itinerant preachers in the Evangelical Association.

Here is another case : A certain man (*Abraham Yeakel*) had come under the conviction that he must be converted to God, in order to be saved. But he had a very uncongenial wife, a veritable Xantippe, whom he feared. One day he cut down a tree in the forest which became entangled, while falling, in the top of another tree. He climbed up and cut off a branch, when the tree turned and a limb struck his head with great force

and threw him down upon the rocks. He was carried into the house in an unconscious state and lay for weeks hopelessly upon his bed in great pain, but more intense than physical pain was the suffering of his soul on account of his sins. At last there came signs of improvement. Then the poor man requested his brother-in-law, who was class-leader, to hold a prayer-meeting for him in his house if the members were not afraid to come. 'What' answered these, 'we should be afraid of a cross woman, when an immortal soul is at stake?' Well, we went there. As we entered the kitchen a kettle of hot water hung over the fire, at another place stood a pail filled with mud-slush, and close by another filled with filth, and the shrew of a wife sat with flashing eyes quietly in a corner. Matters seemed quite serious. We went quickly through the kitchen into the sitting room, and when the class-leader commenced to sing, behold, a pail full of slush is thrown over the brethren, and still another, then came a fire-brand, then a brick, which struck a brother upon the forehead so that the blood flowed down his face! But see! Xantippe herself comes with dishevelled hair and uplifted broomstick toward the class-leader—she strikes, and in the attempt to ward off the blow, it hits his thumb and breaks it, the marks of which he took with him into the grave. Now it was all over with the prayer-meeting. We concluded to leave. She permitted us to pass through the kitchen; the last one, (*Bro. David Schultz*) who was like Nathanael without guile stopped on his own account and told the enraged woman that she must be converted to God or be lost forever, then, quick as a flash, she seized an old rag, dips it into the filth and strikes it 2-3 times around his head! He wiped his face, and as he passed out through the door he shouted: 'Glory be to God! Glory be to God!' And, certainly, in accordance with Luke 6, 22, 23, it was the right time to glorify God. And then we went home. The poor man of the house wept bitterly as we left. He afterward professed to have found the Lord, and, we hope, was saved."

#### § 170. John Seybert's Reports of Victories.

Above all others, did the new Erie circuit prosper, which was formed this year by John Seybert. He reported, at the next Conference, one hundred new converts, and 121 members in all. This was one of the most blessed missions that was ever undertaken by the Society. Its principal places were: the neighborhood of the borough of Erie, Erie County, Pa., and Warren, Warren County. In these two places glorious revivals took place, and each of them had three flourishing classes at the end of the year; there was also a small class of three members, George Muck leader, in the County of Crawford, at the Conneaut lake. The first leaders of the three classes in Erie were: John Hershy, Samuel Heiss, and Jacob Long; and of those in Warren: Martin Esher, Henry D. Grunder, and John Ott. In Mercer County too, there was, during this year, the foundation of a good work laid in the families of Blank, Meyer, Bernhart, Eberhart, and others;

likewise in Butler County, at Zelienopol, Harmony, etc. Mr. Ziegler, the principal man of Harmony, received Bro. Seybert kindly, although he afterward opposed the work. In different places he found open doors among the Methodists, Mennonites, Baptists, Lutherans, and Reformed, preaching in churches, school-houses, private dwellings, barns, and in the woods, with great success. In some places, especially at Warren, public morality was at a very low ebb, and sins and vices of many kinds were predominant. Some parts of the country had no preachers at all; while others had such bad ones, that they would have fared much better without any. These with their followers rose against the strange itinerant, and did their best to drive him out of the country, by slanders, lies, and calumnies, calling him a good-for-nothing fellow, who had left his wife and children in the East, etc. But several of these curates fell into the pits themselves, which they had dug for Bro. Seybert—they lost their places, and were compelled to leave those parts of the country. We subjoin the following extracts from a report of this mission by Seybert himself. He says:—

“I reached my mission on Friday, July 12th, 1833, and lodged with Mr. Gingrich,  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile south of Erie. The following day I looked about for preaching places, and the Lord opened hearts and doors to me. Sunday, 14th, I preached three times, the Lord owning and blessing my humble efforts. Among those who first received me in Erie, where the following persons: John Hershy, Jacob and John Long, Jacob Miller, Gimber, Metzler, Brown, Ripple, Kurtes, Hidler, and toward the close of the year, also Heiss's family. The German settlers of Erie county were Romanists, Lutherans, Reformed, Baptists, and Mennonites; some of whom may have been in a state of grace, while others perhaps were convinced of the necessity of a change of heart—but the great majority lived in impenitency and indifference.”

As already stated, at the close of the year a flourishing society was formed in this part of the country, consisting of three classes. Afterward it increased from time to time, exerting a salutary influence upon other parts of the country, and also furnished a considerable number of candidates for the ministry, several of whom became useful men. Speaking of Warren, Bro. Seybert says:—

“The German (European) population were in a state of gross darkness, and addicted to such vices as cursing, swearing, tippling, etc. As to their religion, they were for the most part Catholics and Lutherans. Their preacher was a drunkard. A German, who had served in Napoleon's army, was their player; but instead of playing the fiddle, he used to whistle: afterwards he too became a subject of converting grace.

“October 10th, I paid the second visit to Warren, remained four days, preached three sermons, and held prayer-meetings. The beginning of the work of grace was now made; a respectable man, named Gross, fell to the ground during the sermon, as if struck by lightning, and continued to

agonize and pray, till he had obtained the pardon of his sins and the new life in God. I visited the healthy and the sick, the wealthy and the poor; who then came to my meetings, and many of them were convinced of the necessity of conversion, and some were really converted. My family visiting and praying with the people in their houses, it appears to me, contributed more to bring about this glorious work of grace, than my preaching. January 17th, I visited Warren the fourth time, remained six days, preached nine sermons, and held four prayer-meetings. This time a powerful work of grace took place. Scoffers, persecutors, and blasphemers broke down, like trees that are uprooted by a mighty hurricane, and were happily converted to the Lord; and many of a more respectable class, also became the blessed recipients of divine grace. Children ten years old, and aged persons from forty to sixty years old, were powerfully affected and brought to repentance and conversion.

"Now, as the tipping minister could do nothing to hinder the work of grace, the above mentioned whistler commenced to assemble his fellow tipplers and dancers at the same time when the converts and anxious inquirers met for prayer, in order to keep them away from the religious meetings and thus prevent their conversion. But at a later period, this whistler also came to my preaching once, and was so powerfully affected and aroused from his carnal security, that he cried in great anguish of soul—'Seybert, pray for me!' This was an astonishing miracle of divine grace, and made a deep impression upon the whole audience. The dancing and playing at this place had now come to an end, as the whistler had embraced religion. Hallelujah!—Another man, who belonged to the more respectable class, came with some of his neighbors, for the purpose of disturbing me while preaching. I was dwelling on God's eternal love and mercy in Christ Jesus, and the persecutor was so powerfully affected during the sermon, that he was roused from his carnal security and melted to tears. He afterward came to meeting as a penitent, fell upon his knees in great distress before the whole assembly, and called upon God for forgiveness. His wife and children followed his example, and all were translated into the liberty of the children of God. Two of his sons are now useful preachers. On the 24th of April, 1834, I took leave of my mission, after I had traveled 3,011 miles, preached two hundred and eighteen sermons, and formed seven classes."

Through this mission, the foundations of the operations of the Association in the north-western part of Pennsylvania were laid, where subsequently several good circuits and promising stations were formed, and many souls enlisted in the service of God. Some time after, several of the members of the Warren society removed to the State of Illinois, and were there among the first who received the preachers of the Evangelical Association. The Warren society has been a regular station for years, and is now in possession of a very good spacious church. In the town of Erie, a

society has also been formed, which has a church and is in a prosperous condition; and in some more places which had been gained by the mission, societies were subsequently formed, and churches erected.

Mohawk circuit in the State of New York, east of Lake Erie, which was likewise formed this year, and served by Frederick Glasser, did not do so well, and was dropped the following year for some reason. With reference to this, Brother Hummel in his first quarterly report of Mohawk mission, in the year 1839, writes as follows: "It is to be regretted, that the work once begun here by our brethren, was not continued. Many souls still in darkness might have been saved."

From the glorious results of the mission, it may be inferred that the brethren, in this case, had been discouraged too soon. Jacob Riegel, the preacher in charge, was yet young and inexperienced, and this may have been one of the reasons why the circuit was dropped so soon.

During this year the Society lost four preachers by death, all of whom had been useful men, and in former years two of them had served as itinerants; viz., Christian Wolf, Frederick Borauf, John W. Miller, and Henry Young.

#### § 171. Conversions among the Schwenkfelders.

About this time the glorious word of conversion among the Schwenkfelders indicated heretofore broke forth with power in that part of the country where the counties of Lehigh, Berks, Bucks, and Montgomery in Pennsylvania conjoin each other, which was in Evangelical parlance called "Upper Milford."\* David Schubert and George Yeakel had already, as we have seen, opened their houses for the Evangelical preachers, and some of the Schwenkfelders attended those meetings and gave approval to the preached word.

It was about this time that the Schwenkfelders elected Andrew Yeakel

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\*) "Upper Milford" is geographically a township in Lehigh County, where this revival took its rise. This "Milford" as it was called by abbreviation, which, however, extended *evangelically* beyond the township, was already in the time of the old *Eastern Conference* a prominent place in the Ev. Association, and retained this honor for a long time in the *East Pennsylvania Conference*. A book of great interest might be written descriptive of the conflicts and victories of the work in that section, but with St. John, we might say, "the world would not comprehend it," for events took place there that "are marvellous in our eyes." At a certain time there existed ten classes which adjoined each other, of which the so-called "Schubert's meeting-house" was the center. Through divisions of circuits, decease of old members, and removal of others, great changes have taken place. The following preachers from "Upper Milford" entered from time to time the ranks of the itinerancy: Lewis Schubert, Daniel Wieand, Abraham Schultz, John Schell, Samuel Gaumer, Reuben Deischer, Jesse Yeakel, Reuben Yeakel, Jesse Loras, Jacob Zern, William K. Wieand, William H. Weidner, A. S. Steltz, and Allen L. Yeakel.

as their junior preacher in that neighborhood, who was a talented and wise man and exerted a large influence among his brethren and others in the circle of his acquaintance. Bro. Yeakel realized the great importance of the ministerial office and felt that he lacked the true fitness for it. This induced him to diligently search the Scriptures and the writings of the reformers of the sixteenth century, and especially of their own venerated founder, Schwenkfeld, for light. He commenced to pray earnestly and to preach repentance and conversion and meanwhile he himself experienced the grace of God in Christ in the regeneration of his heart. In his preaching he now insisted upon assurance of forgiveness and adoption, and a new life in Christ Jesus. This doctrine was divinely blessed to many hearts. His colleague, the senior preacher, now opposed him and denounced such doctrine as fanaticism. This caused a division into two parties. Those who were awakened and penitent adhered to Mr. Yeakel, and the others to the senior preacher. The preaching of Mr. Yeakel became increasingly impressive, and the opposition grew more intense. But the opposition party were in the majority and commenced to threaten expulsion.

Rev. Andrew Yeakel and his adherents—who were seekers of salvation, frequently met in private houses. At one of these meetings, held in the house of Anthony Kriebel, a neighbor to the aforementioned George Yeakel, he declared to his brethren that he regarded the doctrines preached by the Evangelical preachers as being the truth of God which were in accord with the Holy Scriptures, and in the main also in agreement with the doctrines by Schwenkfeld, and that he was now resolved to go forward according to his conscientious convictions of truth and duty, leaving the consequences with God. As they then turned their meeting into a prayer-meeting he told them frankly, that he considered it Scriptural and in accord with the nature of prayer to *kneel* in prayer and would do so *now* (the Schwenkfelders pray standing), and when he fell on his knees all present excepting one, also knelt. This was for this small flock a decisive hour. When in that section, and in those days a person *knelt* in prayer then the cry arose forthwith: “Now the — — — has also been seduced.” Soon enough Andrew Yeakel and his adherents were expelled from the Association of the Schwenkfelders, whereupon they joined the Evangelical Association in which Bro. Yeakel labored for several years as a very useful local preacher until his death in 1837.

Among these men, besides Andrew Yeakel, the following were noted for solidity of character and possessing a good degree of information: Christopher and Charles Yeakel, (brothers of Andrew Yeakel) Anthony Kriebel, Daniel Kriebel, Benjamin Kriebel, George Yeakel, Jeremiah Yeakel, Melchior Schultz, George Schultz, Samuel Yeakel, David Schultz and others, and also a number of young people. These men carefully “proved all things and held fast that which is good.” When they had

ascertained the truth, they took a decided stand in its defense, and remained "unmovable in the work of the Lord" unto the end.\*

### § 172. Another Blessed and Fruitful Year.

In the year 1834 the Western Conference held its session in Lake Township, Stark County, Ohio, beginning on the 5th day of May. Henry Niebel was elected chairman and Charles Hammer appointed secretary. Two local preachers were deposed from the ministry, and one of them expelled from the Church. John J. Kopp and Elias Sichley were ordained deacons and Peter Wiest, Samuel Van Gunten and Jacob Frey received on probation into the itinerancy.

The Eastern Conference again held its session in New Berlin, Pa., beginning on the 2nd day of June. William W. Orwig was elected chairman and John Seybert appointed secretary. The examination of the preachers was difficult and tedious as there had been many complaints presented. One presiding elder was deposed from his office, another itinerant put back on probation in his office, six local preachers deposed from their office, and three of them expelled from the Church. Those were days of strict discipline. Thomas Buck, John H. Yambert, Solomon G. Miller, Daniel Miesse, Jacob Borkert, and John Ræssner located. John Noecker, Jacob Saylor, Daniel Berger, Jacob Riegel, John Riegel and John M. Sindlinger were received into the itinerancy on probation. John G. Zinser was elected presiding elder.

The preachers were stationed as follows :

#### EASTERN CONFERENCE.

Canaan district, John Seybert, P. E. Schuylkill circuit, John P. Leib and John Sensel ; Lebanon circuit, Joseph M. Saylor and Jacob Riegel ; Lancaster circuit, Henry Fischer and Jacob Saylor.

Zion district, William W. Orwig, P. E. York circuit, Jacob Schnerr and Michael F. Maize ; Gettysburg circuit, Daniel Kehr and John Noecker ; Cumberland circuit, Charles Hesser and Abraham Frey ; Shenandoah circuit, Solomon Altimos and John Shimp.

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\* ) Following is an illustrative incident, showing how those men inquired after the truth concerning the assurance of being saved by grace. Charles Yeakel and Daniel Kriebel went one evening to an Evangelical meeting at the house of David Schubert, and on their return homeward they came to a large chestnut tree, standing on the farm of Anthony Kriebel, at which their ways diverged. There they stood, at said tree, *all night* discussing the subject of this assurance until the day dawned in the East. They quoted Scripture passages, the Catechism, old spiritual hymns, passages from Tersteegen, Schwenkfeld, a Kempis, and others, and discussed them. Finally Daniel Kriebel made the declaration that if one's religion is genuine and Scriptural, he must *know* and *feel* it, for the Psalmist has said : "O *taste* and *see* that the Lord is good" — Psalm 34, 8. And thus this important matter was decisively settled by these two men. Comp. Luke 24, 13, etc., etc.

Salem district, John G. Zinser, P. E. Union circuit, J. Young and Daniel Berger; Lycoming circuit, George Brickley and Samuel Tobias; Center circuit, Francis Hoffmann and John M. Sindlinger; Somerset circuit, Henry Bucks and George Schneider; Indiana circuit, John Lutz and Peter Gates.

Carmel district, Philip Wagner, P. E. Lake circuit, Joseph Harlacher and Jacob Boas; Mohawk circuit, Jacob Riegel; Buffalo circuit, Daniel Brickley; Erie circuit, Elias Stoever.

#### WESTERN CONFERENCE

Ohio district, Henry Niebel, P. E. Lancaster circuit, Samuel Baumgartner and George Mattinger; Wooster circuit, Elias Sichley and Daniel Tobias; Sandusky circuit, John J. Kopp and Aaron Yambert; Canton circuit, Charles Hammer and Samuel V. Gunten, Miami circuit, Conrad Kring and Peter Wiest.

The membership now amounted to 4,689, of whom 1,312 belonged to the Western Conference. The increase during the past Conference year was 437. The salary of a single preacher was \$50.12.

The Conference ordered that a second edition of the larger hymn-book—which was called “Saitenspiel” be issued, and appointed John G. Zinser, John Seybert and William W. Orwig as a committee to revise it.

This was another highly blessed and prosperous year. Some of the circuits extended their boundaries considerably, and glorious revivals took place. Schuylkill circuit which then extended to Millersburg, Dauphin County, was especially revived, particularly in the western portion.

Lebanon circuit also expanded in a northeasterly direction beyond Allentown as far as Easton. It was subsequently divided into two circuits and the eastern end named Reading circuit.

On Buffalo circuit, in the State of New York, which had been formed two years before, a glorious revival took place during this year in the town of Boston. Daniel Brickley labored on this field with marked success. Jacob Yanz and George Eis were the first to receive the preachers. The following year a class was formed and George Eis became its leader.

#### § 173. Occurrences in the Vicinity of Allentown.

In the year 1834 the Conference appointed Joseph M. Saylor and Jacob Riegel to this circuit—then called Lebanon. Bro. Saylor's first sermon in this neighborhood was delivered in an orchard owned by Susan Mohr where about a thousand people gathered. How remarkably the sentiment of the people had changed! For a time the people had stayed away, but now they came in crowds. Saylor preached on Acts 26, 18: “To open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.” Divine light and power accom-

panied the word and many who had been sitting in darkness began to see light.

Shortly after this Bro. Saylor preached in the house of David Mertz. After he had begun the service there came into the meeting a parson named Dehring with 10 or 12 of his adherents, who said he had come to show the people that these "Straweler"-preachers were false prophets. But they had before coming in, imbibed considerable "spirit" from a whiskey bottle and hence the parson's speech as well as breath were well flavored. After the preaching was over, Father Mertz and the parson drifted into a debate on the doctrine of salvation from sin. Bro. Saylor asked the parson whether he was willing to discuss this subject with him, to which he answered in the affirmative. Saylor proposed 1 John 1, 7 to him and asked him to explain to the audience what John meant by saying, "*Cleansest from all sin.*" To this he replied, that Paul said, of all sinners in the world he was the greatest. He was then requested to show the place where that statement could be found, which he could not do—he then asked his deacon about the place, but he also confessed his ignorance. After having encountered each other for a short time in this manner, the parson declared he would rather discuss the subject in a public debate. Although his *spirits* could not help him out of his tight place concerning Paul's passage he still seemed confident. Bro. Saylor did not believe it proper to have a public debate on such a subject, but proposed that a meeting be appointed and a text selected now, upon which each of them should preach to that congregation to which Dehring agreed. Then Bro. Saylor said: "And you may have the honor to preach the first sermon," upon which Dehring replied: "And because I am a learned man I will leave the choice of the text to you." Saylor then selected 2 John 9, 10. "*Whosoever transgresseth*" etc., etc. It was then further arranged that this meeting should take place in four weeks in the court-house in Allentown. But on the Sunday previous Mr. Dehring announced that he would not attend the appointed meeting. Many people, however, desired to hear Bro. Saylor on the subject to which he consented, and preached on the selected text in the house of Solomon Butz who had been converted to God a short time before. The house was crowded with expectant hearers, and during the delivery of the sermon so great a manifestation of Divine power took place that nearly everyone present was overwhelmed. The shouts of joy of the converted and the cries of distress from the penitent became quite general. The friends who were present bear testimony that the Lord revealed himself in an extraordinary manner; some of them have since fallen asleep; the few yet living assert that it was altogether beyond description. This occurred in the beginning of the year 1835. It was a decided victory over this so-called highly learned parson and his like, who are nothing but false teachers, clouds without water, wandering stars, apostles of sin, and propagators of falsehood. Upon many people a new light began to dawn, and they saw that their learned parsons were not able to withstand those sincere but

despised men who declared the Word of God in its simplicity and purity. The Lord hath done this. The *Father* was at the helm, the *Master* in the ship, the *wind* in the wheels and the *glory of God* was revealed.

This event gave a mighty impetus to the work of conversion in this neighborhood. Father Henry Mertz soon afterward built a church upon his own land for the Evangelical Association and also donated a burial ground (1835). This was the first church of the Association in Lehigh County. There the remains of Father Mertz and of his wife rest in the same grave—they having died happy in the Lord only a few hours apart, a few years later.

But as the work increased persecution became more fierce, exhausting itself in various puerile tricks of meanness. For instance, the wheels were taken from Father Mertz's buggy and could not be found, until a long time after when the mill-dam was drawn off—they lay in the mire at the bottom. Bro. Jacob Harlacher was a blacksmith, and his bellows were ripped open at night and made useless. At other places the harness was cut into pieces. The shutters of the church and the fences at the burial ground were destroyed. Other attempts more serious are also recorded. As Bro. John Neitz was upon his knees one evening in family worship, a stone was thrown at him through a window, intended to kill him, as was afterward discovered, but the stone missed its aim and struck the inner wall of the house. A certain man named Lessig, who afterward died in the poor-house, confessed after he had been in the death struggle for two days, that he had committed this wicked deed.\*

#### § 174. Remarkable Salaries.

It will be both interesting and instructive to take a closer view of the financial administration and affairs of the Evangelical preachers about this time (1834-5). It will furnish useful matter for practical reflection to the considerate reader. The contributions were then called "general" and were divided by the Conference among the preachers with respect to their wants as nearly equal as possible. In this matter no regard was paid either to seniority in the ministry or official position. Following is an illustrative instance. The contributions in the Eastern Conference amounted to this sum :

General Contributions .....	\$2,064.41
Subsidiary Collections.....	404.61
	<hr/> \$2,469.02

This amount was divided as follows :

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\*) Reminiscences collected by Rev. Henry Stetzel.

	Traveling Expenses.	Clothing.	Total.
Thomas Buck.....	\$ 9.60	\$100.24	\$109.84
John P. Leib.....	6.38	50.12	56.40
Jacob Schnerr.....	7.78	50.12	57.90
John Sensel.....	8.60	50.12	58.72
Daniel Miesse.....	1.99	25.06	27.05
John Roessner.....	7.97	25.06	33.03
John Butz.....	2.65	50.12	52.77
John C. Reisner.....	7.11	100.24	107.35
William W. Orwig.....	8.11	100.24	108.35
John G. Zinser.....	5.70	50.12	55.82
Joseph Harlacher.....	5.32	50.12	55.47
Elias Stoeve.....	8.00	50.12	58.12
Henry Bucks.....	3.86	50.12	53.98
Jacob Barber.....	7.50	91.89	99.39
Samuel Baumgartner.....	2.30	50.12	52.42
Jacob Bell.....	10.00	50.12	60.12
Michael F. Maize.....	12.00	50.12	62.12
Joseph M. Saylor.....	14.00	100.24	114.24
Francis Hoffman.....	5.87	100.24	106.11
Jacob Borkert.....	5.90	41.77	47.67
George Schneider.....	8.75	29.24½	37.99½
George Brickley.....	9.73	75.18	84.91
Charles Hesser.....	10.00	50.12	60.12
John Young.....	6.23	50.12	56.35
Daniel Brickley.....	0.00	50.12	50.12
John Poorman.....	1.80	12.53	14.33
Abraham Frey.....	4.20	50.12	54.32
Solomon G. Miller.....	0.00	50.12	50.12
Jacob Boas.....	8.70	50.12	58.82
Philip Wagner.....	28.38	100.24	128.62
Daniel Kehr.....	6.76	50.12	56.88
Solomon Altimos.....	15.10	50.12	65.22
Peter Bader.....	6.49	41.78	48.27
John H. Yambert.....	15.00	45.94	60.94
John Seybert.....	0.00	50.12	50.12

☞ Reflect—presiding elder John Seybert, performing a giant's-work, was happy and contented in God in the midst of the incredible struggles of the work, with a salary of \$50.12.

#### § 175. Reflections at the Close of this Period.

This was the period of laying the denominational foundation. Bishop Albright died with an *if?* and *but?* in his mind as regards a separate future existence of the Evangelical Association. His immediate followers

adopted the designation "*The so-called Albright People*" not as a permanent name. But when about 1815-17 all hope had vanished that the M. E. Church would receive this German work into their denomination, and the attempt at union with the United Brethren in Christ had also failed, the conviction became fixed in the minds of the Evangelical workmen that this work was to be carried on separately and independently. Upon this the second and enlarged Church discipline and a large hymn-book "*Das Geistliche Saitenspiel*" were published. A General Conference was now held and the name "*The Evangelical Association*", adopted. Thereupon the work was continued with heroic courage, notwithstanding a long continued very oppressive crisis in business and financial circles, which seriously affected all kinds of industries, and all classes of people for about ten years, making a proper financial support of the work impossible during that time.

In connection with the third issue of the Discipline (1830), the doctrinal foundation of the Church was completed by eliminating several unimportant articles of faith, revising others, and retaining the article on "Christian Perfection." By this time the denomination had increased to nearly 6,000; the itinerant preachers numbered about 50; thus the Church had conquered for itself—in spite of indescribable difficulties and obstacles and fierce persecutions, a goodly basis with respect to numbers. We say with deliberation that they had "*conquered*"—for every point gained, yea every inch of ground obtained, so to speak, was acquired by prayers, tears, much severe labor and self-denial and the faithful use of the weapons of spiritual warfare. It was a *hot* but also a *holy* war against sin and the kingdom of Satan, in which not a few valuable lives were sacrificed.

But now the time had arrived when new and pressing needs reminded the brethren of the necessity of giving attention to the erection of the ecclesiastical structure. Meanwhile the Lord had provided good workmen for this task. We group together a few of these and with them pass over into the next period. We mention the following: John Seybert, Joseph Long, William W. Orwig, Charles Hammer, John G. Zinser, Henry Bucks, Henry Niebel, Thomas Buck, John C. Reisner, Adam Ettinger, Joseph M. Saylor, John P. Leib, Francis Hoffman, Philip Wagner, Henry Fischer, John J. Kopp, Joseph Harlacher, Jacob Boas, Conrad Kring, etc. Besides these the brethren had that highly esteemed patriarch John Dreisbach as an excellent counselor in their midst. And now we would pass over into the next period in full accord with the good cheer which was already expressed in the preface to the second edition of the discipline, fittingly constituting an Evangelical motto: "*Success to the Work! Success to the Edifice! Amen.*"

## FOURTH PERIOD.

1835—1850.

ERECTION OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL EDIFICE—MORE RAPID  
SPREAD OF THE WORK.

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The year 1835 constitutes an important and very interesting epoch in the History of the Evangelical Association. Not only did the work progress finely, the bounds expand, and the membership increase, but the General Conference, held this year, adopted a number of new, effectual, and far-reaching means and measures for the promotion of the work. It resolved to publish a periodical as the organ of the Church, called the "*Christliche Botschafter*", requested all preachers in charge to introduce Sunday-schools in our societies wherever practicable, founded the "Charitable Society", besides making other improvements.

## § 176. A Very Prosperous Year.

The Western Conference held its session this year (1835) in Greentown, Stark County, Ohio, beginning on the 4th day of May. Henry Niebel was elected chairman, and Charles Hammer appointed secretary. Four preachers (probably local) were deposed from the ministry, and one withdrew from the Church under charges. John Rössner located on account of impaired health, and George Mattinger on account of family concerns. Joseph Ebert was ordained as deacon.

The Eastern Conference held its session at Lebanon, Pa., beginning on June 1st. William W. Orwig was elected chairman, and John Seybert appointed secretary. One preacher was deposed from the ministry, and Samuel Tobias and Daniel Kehr located on account of feeble health. Ten applicants were admitted on probation, viz., Sebastian Mosser, Henry Thomas, John A. Jacobs, Frederick Miller, Daniel N. Long, John Poorman, Henry Kegel, Jacob Kehr, Samuel Friess and George Seger. The following brethren were ordained as deacons: Jacob Boas, Henry Fischer, John Sensel, John Lutz, Abraham Frey, Michael F. Maize and Solomon Altimos; as elders, Charles Hesser, John P. Leib and Daniel Brickley.

The preachers were stationed as follows:—

## EASTERN CONFERENCE.

Canaan district, John Seybert, P. E. Schuylkill circuit, Charles Hammer and Sebastian Mosser ; Lehigh circuit, Joseph M. Saylor and Jacob Riegel ; Lebanon circuit, Charles Hesser and Henry Thomas ; Lancaster circuit, Jacob Saylor and John Riegel ; Philadelphia, Jacob Schnerr.

Zion district, William W. Orwig, P. E. York circuit, Francis Hoffman and Henry Fischer ; Gettysburg circuit, Solomon G. Miller and John A. Jacobs ; Cumberland circuit, John P. Leib, George Schneider and Frederick Miller ; Shenandoah circuit, Jacob Shimp and Daniel N. Long.

Salem district, Philip Wagner, P. E. Union circuit, John Sensel and John Poorman ; Columbia circuit, Daniel Berger and John M. Sindlinger ; Center circuit, John Brickley and Henry Kegel ; Lycoming circuit, John Young ; Lake circuit, Michael F. Maize and Jacob Kehr ; Buffalo circuit, Joseph Harlacher and Samuel Friess.

Carmel district, John G. Zinser, P. E. Somerset circuit, John Lutz, Abraham Frey and Geo. Seger ; Indiana circuit, Solomon Altimos and Jacob Boas ; Erie circuit, Daniel Brickley and John Noecker ; Canton circuit, Elias Stoever and Peter Gates.

## WESTERN CONFERENCE.

Ohio district, Henry Niebel, P. E. Canton circuit, Jacob Frey ; Wooster circuit, Henry Bucks and Peter Wiest ; Mansfield circuit, John J. Kopp and Samuel V. Gunten ; Sandusky circuit, Samuel Baumgartner and Aaron Yambert ; Lancaster circuit, Conrad Kring and A. Eby ; Miami circuit, Elias Sichly.

The membership at this session was 5,119, the increase during the past year four hundred and thirty, the salary of a single preacher amounted to \$51.60.

Up to this time the minutes of the Western Conference had been recorded by both Conferences, but henceforth this practice ceased although the minutes of the Western Conference were still sent to the Eastern body. A few years later the General Conference ordered that the two Conferences should thereafter send each other copies of their minutes. This was done in order to draw the band of union closer between the two bodies, to enable one Conference to learn from the other, and to better watch over each other. The minutes of the Western Conference were subject to revision and final decision by the Eastern body. Afterward, however, the Conferences became independent of each other, and each was made subject to the General Conference.

As may be seen from the minutes of the Conferences, the number of itinerants increased for several years more rapidly than ever before ; although there were still more or less locations taking place every year,

either on account of bodily infirmities or family concerns.\* Yet in proportion to the number of itinerants, locations were far less frequent now than formerly. The support of the preachers, it is true, was still very low; but as those having families, were now entitled to draw something for them from Conference, and as in addition to their regular support, they were sometimes presented with clothing and provisions for their families,—those who knew how to economize, and met with no losses, nor incurred heavy expenses by sickness, enjoyed a competency. But those who did not understand frugality, or whose families could not accustom themselves to a simple and frugal living, would still fall back.

Moreover, the districts and circuits were from time to time made smaller and more convenient, so that the journeys and labors of the preachers became easier and consequently there was not so much occasion for locating on account of bodily infirmities, although daily, or almost daily, preaching was still the order of the day. Healthy, stout men were expected to do this; and those who were both able and willing to do so, were, on the whole, the best and most efficient preachers. By daily preaching, their whole attention was engrossed, and the mind preserved from worldly

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\*) The following extract from the diary of Rev. John G. Zinser, will show what hardships were often incident to the journeys of the itinerant preachers in those years. Certainly it required great perseverance and a robust constitution to "stand all the storms" and march onward in the itinerant work. Bro. Zinser was then presiding elder on Carmel district.

"August 22nd, 1835, I and Bro. Jacob Boas had to travel 150 miles to the camp-meeting on Indiana circuit in Pennsylvania. We traveled this day about 25 miles and stayed with friends at night. On the next day we traveled over 40 miles, and lodged at night in a tavern. On the 24th we reached Indiana circuit; on that day the camp-meeting began, but we were yet one day's journey away. In the morning I went on (Bro. Boas could not accompany me this day) and had a bad mountainous road to travel. I rode (on horseback) 43 miles, while it rained nearly all day very fast. As the distance was great and the roads very rough, I had to ride for several hours in the night. I had to go through a thick forest, where it was so dark that I had to dismount, in order to find the road with my feet. At last I reached the desired place, but to my sorrow I found nobody at home, and all doors were locked. With great difficulty I found a stable and hay for my horse, and then tried to find another house where I might stay. I wandered in the great darkness through the fields, while it rained still heavily, but could not find a house because I was unacquainted here. Finally I became confused, so that I could scarcely find my way back to the former place. Then I went into the barn, took off part of my wet clothing, knelt down to pray, and I could praise God from my heart that it was still so well with me. Here I had a full opportunity to pour out my heart before him. It was now midnight. I then found a corner of hay where I sat down to sleep but slept very little. At day-break I arose and rode 3 miles further and at last to my great joy reached the campground. Fortunately I suffered no damage to my health. In the afternoon I preached on 2 Peter 2, 9. We had a good meeting, blessed with awakenings and conversions, but also troubled with some disturbances by the unconverted—for the people here are still enveloped in the darkness of error and prejudice."

thoughts ; a taste for reading, study and prayer was cultivated ; their faculties were more rapidly developed, and their usefulness proportionately increased. And even in our days, those who, on the extreme boundaries, in thinly settled Conferences, travel on extensive circuits, preaching almost daily, seem to be, if not the greatest, yet, on the whole, the most useful preachers of the Society. Those, on the contrary, who have but few appointments, which they can fill on Sundays, seem to make, as a general thing, the slowest progress in their calling, and to accomplish the least. As the circuits were in former years too large and difficult, to the injury of some of the preachers ; so many are in our days too small and too convenient, likewise to the injury of many preachers.

In the same ratio in which the number of itinerants increased, so the increase of the membership went on more rapidly. Some of the circuits were enlarged, others divided and new ones formed, and thus many parts of the country were explored and occupied, which for want of preachers, had not been visited before.

The conference year from Spring 1835 to 1836, was again very prosperous, and in reference to increase of membership exceeded every previous year. The work of God spread especially in the East, more particularly again on the upper part of Schuylkill circuit, in Mahantango Valley, where during this year the first camp-meeting was held in that vicinity, on the land of Henry Heppler, which was a very good meeting ; also in Lykens Valley, on Reading circuit in Lehigh County, Upper Milford, and near Allentown at Mertz's, and farther east. In Philadelphia also, where one of our preachers was stationed this year for the first time, the prospects for gathering a large congregation continued to brighten ; the society there increased considerably during the year, and at its close numbered 72 members. The efficient Sunday-school, which has existed there ever since, was established during this year.

On Cumberland circuit, formerly called Franklin circuit, near Carlisle, where the gracious work had begun some years before, it also spread gloriously this year ; the number of believers increased considerably ; those who had been converted in former years, were strengthened in their faith ; and some of those in other parts, who had grown lukewarm, were filled with new zeal. Also on the circuits of Union, Lycoming and Center, the number of believers increased considerably during this year ; likewise on Buffalo circuit, in the State of New York.

In short, the work spread, with but few exceptions, on all circuits of the Society in a glorious manner, and its prospects were on the whole, brighter than ever before.

#### § 177. Beginning of the Work in Allentown and Emaus.

One of the oldest members of our Church at Allentown (Mother Scherrer), frequently stated that, when yet young, she went with her

mother to hear a minister preach in the house of a German druggist, named Kaiser. She was of the opinion that this minister was one of our first preachers, and related a remarkable circumstance in connection with his preaching.

There was a young man present in the meeting who was mocking the preacher and ridiculing the sermon during its delivery. Finally, the preacher addressed him thus: "Young man, you will have a serious departure into eternity!" A short time afterward this young man was struck by lightning and killed in an instant! However, that minister preached there but a few times. This took place in 1817 or 1818. She did not know who the preacher was, but we know that it was Bro. John Dreisbach, who traveled through those parts as presiding elder at that time. Mr. Dreisbach says that he preached but twice in Kaiser's house, and that the second time 4 men took a heavy piece of timber and pushed it against the house with such force that the building trembled. This alarmed Mr. Kaiser, so that he prohibited further preaching in his house. Bro. Dreisbach, then, was the first preacher of the Evangelical Association who preached in Allentown.

Much later, in the year 1835, a second and very earnest effort was made to introduce the work in Allentown by Joseph M. Saylor and Jacob Riegel, which effort was crowned with success.

It was in this year that a colored man, named James Grove, opened his house to the itinerants, who successively preached there. Friends came all the way from Upper Milford to the evening meetings, returning home the same evening. They had 10 or 12 miles to come. The house was crowded, but also surrounded by rude "fellows of the baser sort," and the friends had to suffer many insults and scoffs during worship. But the word made impressions; a man, named Joshua Fink, and his wife were converted to God. Very soon the owner of the house, in which James Grove lived, objected to the preaching service, "*and the door was shut.*" Now Bro. Fink opened his house and the brethren preached there a few times, but he also was persecuted. He could no longer secure any work, so he removed out of town to Cedar Creek, like Lot from Sodom to Zoar, but he was more fortunate than Lot, for his wife did not look back and become a pillar of salt, so both reached Cedar Creek alive. And Allentown also was more fortunate than Sodom, for the messengers of peace, sent by the Evangelical Association, who were regarded as enemies and seducers, were indeed the warmest friends of the people, and through them Allentown has been benefited beyond all calculation.

Thus the work was postponed, but not abandoned. On the 10th of October, 1837, the brethren, John Seybert and Solomon Altimos, preached at 10 A. M. and 2 P. M. on the market-place, because there was no other place open for them in town. A short time afterward a converted man, named Henry Schmidt, removed from Philadelphia to Allentown, intend-

ing to settle there. This brother there opened his house for prayer-meetings and preaching. Bro. Charles Hesser, from Philadelphia, preached there several times in his peculiarly attractive manner, which was a talent given him of the Lord. The Evangelical Association scarcely ever had his like in this respect among its preachers. The word had a powerful effect, the people were attracted and listened most attentively. There were large gatherings, many were touched, convicted and several converted to God. The Presbyterians had a small church, in which Bro. Hesser was permitted to preach, and thereby won a few families for the truth of the Gospel. Bro. Saylor's preaching at James Grove's opened the way, and the conversion of Joshua Fink and his wife were the first fruits of the great harvest at Allentown.

In February or March, 1838, the first class was formed by Francis Hoffman and consisted of the following members: Henry Schmidt and wife, Samuel Beitelmann, Elizabeth Brobst, Adam Geiser, Rebecca Scherrer, Mathilde Scherrer, Judith Nester, Susanna Kuechlein. Henry Schmidt was elected class-leader and Adam Geiser exhorter. Soon thereafter a second class was formed and Father Henry Mertz made class-leader.

In the Spring of 1838 initial steps were taken toward the erection of a Church, which was also accomplished and the edifice was dedicated to divine worship on November 26th of that year.

How wonderful are the ways of the Lord!

In October, 1837, the brethren, Seybert and Altimos, preached on the market-place because no foot of room could be had elsewhere in the town for an Evangelical preacher, and in November, 1838, they could dedicate a house of worship, where the truth of the Gospel could be preached freely without let or hindrance. How could the brethren Saylor and Riegel, and even Bro. Seybert, expect in 1837, when every door was locked against them that a house of God for the use of Evangelical preachers would stand there in 1838? Father Mertz was the main factor in this work. It was the work of God, which the brethren desired to establish in the midst of darkness, for this reason they succeeded even in such a way as God only could lead them.

"God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform,  
He plants his foot-steps in the sea  
And rides upon the storm."

Many years later Bro. Saylor wrote to a friend of the time when he preached that sermon in 1834 in an orchard in the Cedar Creek class: "At that time," he says, "we had no church in Lehigh County and very little entrance. Now we have 4 large Churches in Allentown and at least 12 others outside the town and hundreds of houses, in which the Evangelical preachers are gladly welcomed."

From the Cedar Creek class the work reached the village of Emaus, in

Lehigh County, where it met with vehement opposition. Bro. F. Fehr opened his house for preaching; the enemies frequently broke the windows, but this knit the few friends more closely together and made them more decided to fight the good fight of faith. Bro. Seybert declared once in a sermon he preached there how the power of grace was able to overcome the "entire work of the devil." He said among other things. "If a drunkard has for years been an inebriate and nothing could save him, yet when he is converted to God so that he is *born into eternal life*, God's grace can strengthen him so that he could swim through an ocean of alcohol from here across to Canada without lusting after it; for almighty grace is able to eradicate all desire for strong drink out of man's being when he turns to God!"

And from here the work extended to Springtown, Bethlehem, Easton, Catasauqua, Nazareth, Weissport,\* &c., &c.

### § 178. The Fifth General Conference.

As the General Conference had not hitherto been held regularly every fourth year, but only when it was deemed necessary, the intervals were sometimes more, sometimes less than four years.†

Thus we have seen that the fourth General Conference took place, as already stated, in November 1830, the fifth was held in May 1835, four and a half years after, while the sixth took place in November 1836, after an interval of only eighteen months.

Pursuant to a resolution of the Eastern Conference of 1834, the General Conference assembled on May 25th, 1835, at Orwigsburg, Schuylkill County, Pa. As the rule to elect delegates had not yet been introduced, each elder had the privilege of attending and voting as a member of Conference

Henry Niebel was elected chairman, who appointed John G. Zinser, secretary.

A much larger amount of business claimed the attention of this body, than had been the case at any former General Conference; the most important items are here inserted. The presiding elder districts were, to some extent, changed, and the Conference districts divided differently. The circuits of Somerset, Indiana, and Erie, were cut off from the Eastern Conference, and added to the Western; they were, together with Canton

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\*) Reminiscences by Rev. Henry Stetzel.

†) The Eastern Conference was practically a continuation of the original Conference which called the first session of General Conference in 1816. She exercised this power without question or dispute, whenever thought necessary until 1839. At the General Conference held that year, the Eastern Conference was dissolved and two new annual Conferences formed out of her territory, membership and ministry of about equal dimensions and numbers, and both of these new Conferences started their official records with the year 1840. And since that time the General Conference has always appointed its own sessions.

circuit of the Western Conference, formed into a new presiding elder district, called Carmel district. Thus the Eastern Conference numbered three districts, viz., Canaan, Zion, and Salem; while the Western numbered two, viz., Carmel and Ohio. But in the following year, the Western Conference formed three out of its two districts, and called the new one Tabor district. The Conferences of those days seem to have had a strong predilection for figurative names for their districts; which, however, represented nothing more than the land, and certain mountains and cities of the Israelites of old, without indicating, in the least, their geographical position; subsequently, however, the Conferences took this point always into consideration in naming their districts. The time of session for the Annual Conferences was also changed, the month of March being fixed on instead of May and June.

This Conference also enacted a law, requiring a book to be kept on every circuit and station, for the purpose of recording therein the minutes of the quarterly Conferences; and to hold local preachers conferences on every circuit, containing several of them; and prescribing the rules and routine of business for their sessions, as they are contained in the Discipline. There was also an order of procedure adopted for this local preachers' Conference in which a few items concerning the decision of charges are especially remarkable. They read thus: "When charges have been preferred, to decide them properly in the investigation, by a majority of votes, in accordance with the directions of the Discipline." Already in 1810 the Conference rule was introduced that all matters and cases should be decided by a majority of votes which has always since been practiced by the General, Annual and Quarterly Conferences, and was now also introduced into this *newly created* Conference. The enactment of this Conference, requiring German Sunday-schools to be introduced into our societies, wherever practicable, and making tit obligatory on the superintending preachers to take an active interest in this matter, was seasonable and very wholesome for the connection; but the word "German" had to be struck out afterward, because it gave rise to misunderstanding, some contending that the introduction of English or partly English Sunday-schools was forbidden thereby. Heretofore it seems there had not been a single Sunday-school established within our borders; although many of our members sent their children to the Sunday-schools of other denominations, and patronized them. But shortly after this Conference, these nurseries of the Church arose in various places within the Association.

The good cause, however, in some places met with opposition, by members of the Church. Partly for the want of better information, partly from prejudices, strengthened by false reports as to their end and object, some in other respects well disposed persons looked upon Sunday-schools as dangerous and as belonging to "Babel"; and so likewise afterward with regard to the cause of missions, when its claims were urged on the attention

of the Society at large. Yet, the second number of the "*Christliche Botschafter*," dated February, 1836, contains the following remarks, setting forth the manner in which this enactment of General Conference had been received by the Church at large, and expressing strong hopes that it would be universally carried out :—

"We are pleased to learn, that in compliance with the injunctions of General Conference, measures are taken nearly throughout the Evangelical Association, to introduce Sunday-schools. . . . . Our preachers on their respective circuits, have exerted themselves, and succeeded without meeting with great opposition, in making a promising beginning in this good cause. It is true, the cause does not yet command that general attention, to which, in our opinion, it is so eminently entitled ; but it is progressing, and we hope to see ere long, at least one Sunday-school established in each class of every circuit, throughout the entire Association."

It is indeed a small matter, in which place the first Sunday-school of the Association was established, yet New Berlin, Pa., seems to claim this honor ; while others are of the opinion that it is due to Lebanon, Pa. At all events, it is certain that in these two places, as well as in Orwigsburg and Philadelphia, the first Sunday-schools of the Society were established. The first report of the Philadelphia Sunday-school was published in the "*Botschafter*", Vol. I. No. 3, page 20. At first the main object was to establish German Sunday-schools. This was, however, soon found to be impracticable, as not only many members were in favor of putting the English on an equal footing with the German ; but in some places a sufficient number of German teachers could not be found, and in others none at all. The English language was then also introduced. Yet in the maritime cities, where the congregations consist almost exclusively of European German members, and in some places in the North and West, the Sunday-schools are still exclusively German. The scarcity of proper German Sunday-school books, was at first another great obstacle to German schools ; but this evil was soon after remedied, in part at least, by the Publishing House of the Society.

The founding of the "*Charitable Society*" of the Evangelical Association, was another useful measure of this Conference. The object of this society is, to take charge of all legacies which have been or may still be bequeathed to the Society, to relieve poor superannuated itinerants, and after their death, their widows, and orphans under 14 years of age ; to loan them out on lawful interest, with sufficient security, and to divide the yearly proceeds among the several Annual Conferences of the Church, for the purpose aforesaid. This was the original object of said legacies ; but as the proceeds from the funds were formerly rarely or never altogether used for this purpose, permission was granted to apply the surplus to the support of the itinerants in actual service. The society consists of nine trustees, and is lawfully incorporated for the management of said funds.

Following are the names of these trustees : John Seybert, Jacob Hammer, Joseph Hammer, Eli Hammer, Samuel Rickert, John Rickert, John P. Leib, William Wildermuth and Andrew Schwalm.

The rule with regard to the salary of the preachers was also changed by this Conference. Hitherto the married preachers, who had served five years or more as itinerants, had received, irrespective of the number of their children, equal salaries, *i. e.*, twice as much as an unmarried preacher. This rule was now changed as follows : a married preacher without children was to receive three halves of the salary of a single man ; and he who had one or two children, seven-fourths ; and he who had three or more children, double the amount of the salary of an unmarried preacher. By this change married men who had either no children at all or not more than two, suffered a considerable diminution of their salary, while that of unmarried men, who needed it the least, was considerably increased ; for this reason the rule was soon after repealed. In the next place, it was resolved that a preacher having been married two years previous to his entering the itinerancy, should after two years be entitled to an allowance for his family, according to the above rule ; but a newly married preacher was to be put on an equal footing with a single one, *i. e.*, he was to travel five years before he should be entitled to any allowance for his family. The latter clause of this rule was afterward changed from five to four years. Many young preachers, indeed complained of this rule ; but it has thus far remained in force, being considered just and wholesome. Its object was, to prevent young inexperienced preachers from burdening the societies, which they may be called to serve, with the maintenance of their families ; or rather, to induce a young man, who is called to the ministry in single life, to remain in that state, till by his usefulness he gains the confidence of the Church, and acquires some practice and experience in his office. And experience also taught, that those young men who travel a number of years before they marry, become the most useful and efficient preachers, and usually maintain their posts as heralds of the Gospel the longest.

#### § 179. Founding of the "Christliche Botschafter".

The most important measure of this Conference, was the resolution for publishing the "*Christliche Botschafter*", a measure which proved much more important than had been anticipated. This enterprise, however, like all others, met with considerable opposition even from an influential party of Conference itself—yet a great majority was in its favor. A religious paper had long before been felt to be a desideratum in the Church ; but this feeling had not been general, but confined to comparatively few. The German Churches of those days were, in general, unacquainted with this kind of literature ; and only those members who were in the habit of reading similar English papers, were prepared to appreciate its value and importance. Some attempts of the kind by other denominations had failed ; and even

some English religious papers were but feebly patronized, while others from want of support failed altogether. Add to this, that some considered the enterprise a dangerous innovation, similar to Sunday-schools, the temperance cause, etc. For these and similar reasons it required a great deal of persevering effort to procure the number of 700 subscribers, as stipulated by General Conference. Some apprehended that the paper in question would make the Church proud and worldly-minded; that its members would attach too much importance to mere literary attainments. Others said they had the Bible, with which they were satisfied, as the contemplated paper would scarcely be better than that.

General Conference appointed a committee from the Eastern Conference to publish the paper in the manner prescribed, as soon as the above mentioned number of subscribers could be procured. The superintending preachers, all of whom had been constituted agents for the periodical, went to work in a spirited manner, and early the next fall it appeared that the enterprise could be carried out, according to the conditions laid down. The Brethren Adam Ettinger, of York County, Pa., and George Miller, of New Berlin, who was a printer, were charged by said committee with the publication of the paper, and thus its first number appeared in January, 1836; during the first four years of its existence, it appeared but once a month. The first number was anxiously looked for, and was received and read with delight by many.\* Although defective, both with regard to arrangement, order, contents, and external appearance; yet its friends became more and more satisfied of its usefulness and advantage for the Church, so that the number of its patrons increased every month, till at the close of the second year, they had risen to 1500. At first, it had but few correspondents, and these kept themselves as much as possible in the back-ground, as their names appeared but rarely; perhaps they were afraid of giving offense, or of becoming proud by seeing their names so often in print. But in course of time this changed, and the names of correspondents were given more frequently, especially in connection with reports. Although the contributors were mostly inexperienced, and their diction imperfect, yet the periodical became more and more popular, and exerted a very salutary influence on the Association. The reports of revivals and new openings to the cause of the Gospel, and its progress generally—the times of meeting of the Conferences, and their minutes in extract—deaths and other important events, described in simple, yet enthusiastic and glowing language—such and similar subjects filled its columns, and the results brought about thereby, were glorious; the Association learned to know itself and others better—its various parts became more closely and intimately united—the interest in the general welfare was rapidly increased—unanimity in the application of

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\* The appearance of the first number of the *Botschqfter* in his father's house is one of the most pleasant recollections of the early years of the author. With what interest and joy it was welcomed!—It was, as it were, an angel's visit!

the most efficient means and measures for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom was promoted—the talents and energies of the Connection were called into healthful action, and thus its prosperity and more rapid increase were effectually secured. The establishment of this periodical was, therefore, one of the best measures the Association ever took to develop its strength, extend its borders, enhance its influence, and to increase its usefulness among sister Churches.\*

Bro. Ettinger's residence being at a great distance from New Berlin, where the periodical was printed by Geo. Miller, he resigned his editorship already in the first year; and thus the paper came, after it had existed 15 months, into the hands of Rev. William W. Orwig, who edited it nearly seven years in succession, during which time both its circulation and usefulness greatly increased, although there was still room left for improvements.

In addition to this, Conference resolved to have an edition of 4,000 copies of the smaller hymn-book printed; a committee was appointed to examine "Fletcher's Appeal," and to decide about the expediency of getting this work translated into German.† In accordance with Conference rule the General Conference was solemnly closed with prayer and the signing of the proceedings by all the participating members in token of willingness and acquiescence, as follows: Henry Niebel, J. Geo. Zinser, John Seybert, Wm. W. Orwig, Philip Wagner, James Barber, John Breidenstein, John C. Reisner, Joseph Long, Chas. Hammer, John H. Yambert, Conrad Kring, Jacob Schnerr, Daniel Kehr, Solomon Miller, Geo. Brickley, Francis Hoffmann, Elias Stoever, Jos. M. Saylor.

In consequence of the change of the times for the Conference sessions, the conference year of 1835–36 was shortened by two months; it had, notwithstanding, a greater increase than any former year, viz., 509. The membership of the entire Association at the end of this year, was 5,628.

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\* ) It was a remarkable phenomenon that these "Albright-People," who were regarded by certain self-important ecclesiastics as a very simple-minded people, so early undertook such a literary enterprise. The Association did not quite number 6000 members. Other denominations numbering their German members by *tens of thousands*, and with no lack of D. D.'s, had no German Church paper. The *Christliche Botschafter* is therefore the *oldest* German Church paper in America, and what is still more—it is the most successful. It has kept up the highest number of subscribers among its confreres in America, and is in a literary respect fully equal to any of them. Financially it not only sustained itself from the beginning but in great part assisted in raising its younger brother—the *Evangelical Messenger*—and besides that furnished thousands of dollars to the support of poor preachers, and their widows and orphans. God grant unto the *Botschafter* a long life and still greater blessings!

† ) This excellent book was afterward published in German. It contains a series of irrefutable proofs of the moral depravity of fallen human nature, or *original sin*. It was intended to counteract Pelagianism, viz., the denial of inherited sinfulness, which had slyly crept into the views of some of the preachers, and it accomplished this object fully.

### § 180. The Most Prosperous Year.

Up to this time it seemed necessary to insert the annual stationing of the preachers into this history especially because the old conference record, consisting of a single copy was accessible to few. But now the *Christliche Botschafter* made its appearance, in which the stationing reports were published and whose volumes have been largely preserved. Conferences also increasing in number, these reports would become monotonous. Moreover, each Conference keeps its own record which is accessible to its members whenever necessary—hence we regard it proper to omit the stationing reports from this time forward.

Both Conferences held their annual sessions in 1836, in March, the Western beginning the 7th, and the Eastern the 28th of the month; the former in Jackson township, Wayne County, Ohio; the latter at Rebersburg, Centre County, Pa. Four of the itinerants located, and eight new applicants were admitted on trial. The Eastern Conference numbered 30, the Western 25 itinerants, in all 55. Ten years before, in 1826, the entire number of itinerants had been 21.

During this year, the Association prospered more than it had done in any previous year. Although the preceding year had a greater increase than any former one, yet this year the same was more than doubled. Nearly all circuits of both Conferences had a considerable increase of members; in several places glorious revivals took place, and many circuits enlarged their borders by taking up new preaching places, and forming new classes. The Eastern Conference received 747, the Western 673 new members; in all, 1420. The old Union circuit of the Eastern Conference had considerable additions this year, the result of an extensive revival, that occurred along the Susquehanna below Selinsgrove, under the superintendence of Daniel Berger and Christian Holl. During a camp-meeting, which was held there in August, a considerable number of precious souls had already been awakened and converted. Toward the close of December, and in the beginning of January, a protracted meeting was then held there in private houses, one day in this, the next in another place, which resulted in a number of conversions, some of which were of a very remarkable character. The Strickler's family, on the island in the Susquehanna, opposite the section of the country under consideration, were converted this year, and afterward added to Schuylkill circuit.

It the City of Philadelphia also, the work made glorious progress this year. Divine service was held there in a large school-house, near the spot on which the church of the first society was afterward erected, between North 2nd and St. John's streets, near Poplar lane. Toward Christmas a glorious revival began, which continued nearly all Winter, with but few interruptions. The society was strengthened thereby, and its influence greatly increased. At the close of the Conference year, in March, 1837,

the society numbered 124 members, and the prospects for the future were flattering. During this revival, one evening a woman, 94 years of age, made her appearance with others at the altar of prayer, and at the close of the service, professed to have found peace with God, rejoicing in his love. This, indeed, was entering into the vineyard of the Lord at the eleventh hour.

#### § 181. Introduction of Protracted Meetings.

About this time the so-called "protracted meetings" were introduced into the Evangelical Association. Before this, the general and quarterly meetings usually lasted but two or three days, although several other Christian denominations had introduced such meetings long before. The cause for their introduction was as follows: It was often found, that not until the close of two or three days' meetings would the audience become awakened and affected, and that if the meeting had been continued a few days longer, many would, in all probability have been converted, as experience had often shown at camp-meetings, which generally lasted five, six and even eight days. Some of the brethren tried this method and met with very good success.

But like every new measure, this also found its opponents. It was objected that during such a meeting, other parts of the field would necessarily be neglected, that it would become a burden to the neighborhood. But as the good results of such meetings were published in the Church paper, they were soon advocated and tried by other brethren. Bro. Jacob Boas was one of the first to hold such a meeting. He held one near Conneaut Lake, Pa., at which about 30 persons were converted. Bro. Jacob Riegel also held such a meeting on Lake circuit in New York State, which lasted sixteen days, and resulted in the formation of a new class of 25 members. Bro. Riegel also published a strong article in favor of such meetings in the *Botschafter*.

In consequence of these and other reports and commendations of such meetings, they increased rapidly, and in the course of a few years became quite general in the connection, proving a blessing to hundreds and thousands of souls, and contributing much to the rapid increase of the Association. In several instances they lasted from four to six weeks, and were richly blessed of God.

It cannot be denied, however, that they were, and still are, sometimes abused, to the great detriment of the good cause; for some preachers spent nearly all their time, or at least the greater part of it, in holding such meetings, and accomplished comparatively little, at the same time neglecting to enlarge their fields of labor, to take up new preaching places, and to fill their distant appointments. Others sometimes appoint a number of such meetings in advance, allowing for each the space of several weeks; and if the prospects are not very promising at the very outset, they bring

them to a close, and then have no appointments for the rest of the time, and, as a matter of course—go home. Thus, in many instances, a great deal of time is lost, and but little accomplished. The work of such meetings, is also sometimes too much forced; and, frequently these meetings have of late not been as successful as formerly—especially in such places where they are often repeated. Their novelty has worn off, and their impression is not so strong as formerly. For this reason some have opposed these meetings, while others have dropped them entirely. It is true, the earlier mode of operation has thereby been changed somewhat. At first it was the object of every service and prayer-meeting, to persuade mourners to come out and be converted, which was often accomplished. But now this is in too many places put off to the protracted meeting, and even then sometimes but little is done. The good “old measures” ought never to be dropped; and it should be our aim to use, in connection with them, the “new ones” to the greatest possible advantage of the whole Church.

That protracted meetings may sometimes be abused, to the great detriment of the cause of religion, both in the Evangelical Association and other denominations, is no reason against their proper use. And the assertion, that such meetings are often followed by times of spiritual drought, is, to some extent, true; but this drought is no necessary consequence of them. Such a consequence is, as experience has often taught, always the fruit of mismanagement of such meetings; overdoing the exercises, dismissing the meeting at too late hours, exhaustion, dullness, etc.; and after such meetings are over, neglect of the regular services and of the conscientious use of the ordinary means of grace. Under these circumstances a re-action is quite natural and unavoidable; but for this the protracting of the meeting can never be blamed.

We would add to the above, that some preachers have fallen into the error not to expect conversions except in protracted meetings, and they do not preach with that faith which gives the word immediate effect, nor do they labor for immediate conversions. The preacher ought to expect of every sermon that the word will “not return void”. He must be filled with the Holy Spirit and preach with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power, then will be repeated the scene in the house of Cornelius under the preaching of Peter: “While Peter yet spake these words the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word”—Acts 10, 44. In this Spirit, and with such results generally, did our Evangelical fathers preach the Gospel.

#### § 182. A Remarkable Camp-meeting.

In the month of August, 1836, a camp-meeting was held on the farm of General Henry Mertz, near Allentown, Pa.; and as this was the first camp-meeting held in that part of the country, it caused quite a stir at the eastern end of the State. Great crowds of people flocked together. Allen-

town especially furnished a large contingent to the immense gathering. Such a meeting held in the woods seemed to them like one of the great wonders of the world.

The word of God was preached in the power and demonstration of the Spirit. Bro. John Breidenstein—a valiant soldier for Christ and a powerful preacher—preached on 2 Corinthians 6. 2: “Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation”; John Seybert preached with power on John 3. 2–5; Jacob Schnerr on Titus 2. 11–13; Jacob Saylor on Ephesians 2. 19, 20; Joseph M. Saylor on Psalm 40. 1–4. Also John P. Leib and others preached with great clearness. Bro. Seybert had “victory” on the first evening; we remember well how impressively he exclaimed in the language of the Psalmist: “The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.” Verily those men were *zealots* for the “house of the Lord” in the pure sense of the word.

The visiting people were struck with wonder at the neat, white muslin tents which stood in regular order among the leafy trees, shaped like small one-story houses. A farmer stepped into the tent of Charles Yeakel, and inspected it closely for some five minutes, and then exclaimed in the Pennsylvanian dialect: “Well, nau, dess iss ah *scheh* exempel!” (Well, now, this is a fine example.) A highly talented, pious sister from Orwigsburg, Pa., whose name was Catharine Reible—quaintly known as the “German Catharine,” because she was a native of Europe—frequently prayed in public services with such remarkable unction as astonished the people who had never before heard a woman pray in public worship. This sister also talked privately to persons about their souls’ salvation in a way that won respectful attention. A great many debates arose among the people on the ground; some said: “These preachers tell the truth, and we are wrong.” This would anger others who contradicted and reviled. One afternoon a disturbance was made during worship, when Gen. Henry Mertz stepped among the people and with a friendly but serious voice told them that they had no right to transgress the law of the land by disturbing divine worship, and that it behooved them as American citizens to respect and honor religious liberty by their example, and that they as Church-people and neighbors, ought to conduct themselves in a respectful manner—“for these people,” said he, “hold worship here in God’s temple of nature; they do not intend to harm any one, and all of you have liberty to hear their preaching and then judge for yourselves.” Gen. Mertz was tall and stately in person, there was something military in his appearance, and he was withal a man of renown and much experience. His short, impressive address soon restored quiet among the restless throng.

Some remarkable conversions took place. A very proud lady came under conviction and deep distress, so that she sank to the ground seemingly unconscious. As she was thus lying in a tent, surrounded by a crowd of people, she seemed suddenly to wake up, tore off her fashionable head-dress and

threw it away. When she became fully conscious again, she asked one of the sisters what had become of her ornaments. When she was told what she had done, she exclaimed: "I felt as if fiery coals were burning me there, and I wiped them away!" A respectable man from the neighboring village of Emaus, named George Kemmerer was convinced by the preached word. He said: "These men preach the truth, and these people who sit here so humbly and devoutly are in the right way." He was deeply convicted, went home, was converted to God and remained faithful until his death. There were other similar cases.

The "friends" had come together from many distant places, and became so closely united in love that it was difficult for them to separate. The exercises of the last night were continued until daybreak, and then a farewell service was held, by forming a circle and shaking hands amidst the singing of farewell hymns, accompanied by tears and shouting, and many mutual promises to meet each other again in the "New Jerusalem" above. They started for home, strengthened in faith, willing to bear the cross, endure persecution and win souls for Christ—which was regarded as a sacred duty by each "converted one" in those times.

#### § 183. Increase—Death of Bro. John Rössner.

The number of members at the close of the Conference year was 6,665, an increase of 1,037 over the previous year. This was very encouraging to the entire ministry in prosecuting the work and also confirmed the hope that the new regulations adopted by General Conference had received divine approval and would result in great good to the Church.

Bro. John Rössner, a useful preacher of the Association, closed his earthly career this year. In 1828 he was converted, in the State of Ohio, and afterward joined the Church. In 1831 he came to Pennsylvania to attend the session of the Eastern Conference, and was received into the itinerancy. He was of slender stature, about six feet high, of a sanguine temperament and witty, and almost universally beloved on account of his affability. For want of practice and because he had read but little, his preaching was at first feeble; but by assiduity in reading and searching, he made rapid progress and soon became a very useful preacher. He was always active in his calling, and was especially intent on seeking new preaching places, for which he was particularly qualified by his philanthropy and courageousness. Revivals were his element, and he delighted in working with the mourners at the altar. But he impaired his health by over-exerting himself in his exercises, and exposing himself too much to the weather. Thus he once almost froze to death on horseback, on a very cold winter day. On dismounting and entering a house, he fainted away. There he probably contracted his disease, which was consumption. He traveled for two years in succession on York circuit, and he was generally beloved. In 1833, he served on Lancaster circuit of the Eastern Conference; but

could no longer perform his duties properly, on account of an increasing cough and debility. At the next Conference session he located. He then returned to the State of Ohio, made an attempt to travel again, but it was only for a short time. His disease became worse, till in 1836 he was confined to his bed, and after a great deal of severe suffering, died peacefully and happy in the Lord, January 5th, 1837, in the County of Wayne, Ohio.

**§ 184. The Sixth (a Special) Session of General Conference.—Founding of the Publishing House.**

Some of the preachers having for several years prior to this General Conference, looked upon the re-opening of a printing establishment and book-bindery of our own as practicable and advantageous; and as the publication of the "*Christliche Botschafter*", the introduction of Sunday-schools, and the more rapid increase of the Association, which increased also the demand for books, seemed to make this measure really necessary; therefore the Eastern Conference, at its session in March, 1836, appointed a Special General Conference, to be held in November next, mainly for this purpose. Each elder in the ministry still had a right to attend General Conference, and was entitled to a vote; but notwithstanding this, only a comparatively small number were in attendance.

Conference met on Monday, Nov. 14th, 1836, in the house of John Ferner, in Somerset township, Somerset County, Pa., and closed its session on Saturday following, Nov. 19th. According to the directions of our Discipline, it was organized by electing Henry Niebel chairman, who appointed Charles Hammer secretary.

The Publishing House for which this Conference had been called, claimed and received its main attention. But although principally convened for this object, yet the proposition to create a printing establishment and book-bindery of our own, met with great opposition; it is true, this opposition proceeded from but few members, but they wielded a powerful influence. They pronounced the enterprise to be premature, unsafe, and impracticable—called to mind the former attempt in the matter and its failure, sparing no efforts to induce Conference to drop the subject, which almost succeeded. Even the warmest advocates and friends of the enterprise, at one time vacillated somewhat during the discussion; but soon recovering they then maintained the practicability and advantages of the undertaking with all possible arguments at their command, and with the greatest assurance of final success. At last, after protracted debates, it was resolved by a majority, that the year following a printing office and book-bindery be established at New Berlin, Union County, Pa.; and if sufficient money could not be raised to purchase a lot and erect a suitable building thereon, it was resolved, that a building be rented for the purpose, and to proceed in the matter as well as they could.

Philip Wagner, John Rank, and William W. Orwig, were elected trus-

tees, to superintend the founding and managing of said Publishing House. Bro. Orwig was, in addition to this, appointed agent to solicit contributions for said purpose, within the district of the Eastern Conference; he was also elected Editor of the "*Christliche Botschafter*", and General Agent of the Establishment. He could, however, not enter upon the duties of the latter offices before April, 1837, as he had to devote all the time up to that period to the collection of funds. This accumulation of duties, imposed upon him in founding and managing the Establishment, he looked upon, to some extent, as a punishment for his enthusiasm in the enterprise.\* The presiding elders and superintending ministers were also requested to assist in collecting, in those parts which the agent might be unable to visit.

Simultaneously with the publication of the resolutions of this Conference, concerning the Printing Establishment, the following editorial appeal to the entire membership for a liberal support of the enterprise appeared in the Periodical of December, 1836:—

"While we lay before our friends the principal resolutions of General Conference, we would make the following suggestions with regard to their resolutions and propositions to establish a printing office and book bindery of our own. That such an enterprise involves heavy outlays, all can readily imagine; and that the Evangelical Association has no funds on hand to meet these expenditures, is likewise known to all. Those therefore, who look upon such an establishment as useful and necessary, will not deem it strange to be called upon for help, which, we trust, they will feel disposed to impart; and this the more so, if they will bear in mind, that what they contribute toward this object, is in reality the same, as what they are in the habit of giving toward the support of the Gospel; for, besides the benefit derived from good books, to be printed in the Establishment, the entire avails arising therefrom, will be applied toward the support and further spread of the Gospel. Hence we confidently expect that our brethren and friends, who have always been ready to support every good cause, will in the present instance also have open hearts and hands, that the Kingdom of God may be built up everywhere, and his honor promoted."

A subscription for said purpose was immediately opened at the session of General Conference, and the majority of the brethren subscribed very liberally, considering the times and their circumstances, and most of them *paid cash* their full amounts subscribed.—On Christmas following, the agent commenced to solicit subscriptions among the membership, during a general meeting in Rebersburg, Center County, Pa., and \$264 were subscribed. The following four days he traveled in Penn's Valley of the same county, preached every evening, and \$200 more were subscribed. During the watch-night on the last of December, in Buffalo Valley, he received

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\*) Bro. Orwig was the chief advocate for establishing the "*Botschafter*" and the Publishing House.

\$50; and during the following five weeks he traveled throughout the Counties of Schuylkill, Lebanon, Berks and Lehigh, as far as Philadelphia, and over \$1000 were subscribed. The friends, both rich and poor, generally manifested great readiness to support the enterprise; and it seemed as if the Lord directed them in so doing. Orwigsburg, Lebanon and other vicinities, and Upper Milford, especially excelled by their liberality. Also in the Counties of York and Cumberland, which the agent, on account of indisposition, could not visit, the preachers received many liberal contributions, as well as in many other places within the Eastern Conference. In the Western Conference no general efforts were made in the matter; yet some of its circuits contributed liberally toward it, especially that of New Lancaster.\*

But before much had been done by way of collecting, and ere it was known how the agent would succeed, the trustees purchased a house and lot, in Water street, New Berlin, near the church of the Association, for three hundred dollars, at a sheriff's sale. But when it was ascertained that the support of the enterprise would outstrip the most sanguine expectations of its friends, said property was exchanged for a spacious brick building in New Market street, and \$1600 were given to boot. This was a bold, unexpected step, which was approved by many, but also censured by not a few. Those who did not favor the enterprise and gave nothing toward it, were loudest in their censures. The trustees, however, were not discouraged thereby, but purchased the necessary materials, and prepared the house both for carrying on the business, and for the General Agent and the printer to reside therein, both of whom moved into it the following Spring; toward the close of the same year, the new printing office went into operation. As has already been stated, the printing and book binding was done, from the failure of the first Publishing House up to this time, by George Miller.

With regard to the editor of the "*Christliche Botschafter*," it was resolved, that he shall in future always be elected by General Conference, be eligible only for two terms in succession, each of 4 years, and that his salary shall be as much as an itinerant actually receives, not what he is entitled to by Discipline, and the sum of an unmarried itinerant's salary for his board. Thus his salary was, at first, from \$90 to \$110, besides from \$45 to \$55 for his board. But, as it was impossible for him to subsist on this small allowance, he received additions of from \$25 to \$35 several times,

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\*) The preachers gave liberally to this enterprise. As Bro. Christian Hummel once said at a missionary meeting, that preachers should respect the admonition by Paul to Titus: "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works." This they did at this General Conference and many members followed their example. The fact that the Ev. Association heartily welcomed and supported the publication of the *Botschafter* and the founding of a Publishing House at a time when she had no member that was considered worth more than \$50,000, speaks loudly for their sound sense and intelligence.

and at the close of seven years, another addition of \$100 from General Conference. During the first two years he also filled the office of General Agent ; but as afterward a General Agent was elected, he received the same salary General Conference had fixed upon for the editor. The other employes of the Publishing House were paid the usual prices for their labor.

In consequence of this economical arrangement and administration, the House soon yielded considerable profits, which were partly distributed among the conferences, partly applied to the increase of the business stock, something which had never before taken place while the printing and binding had been done elsewhere. These results satisfied all, that the possession of a Publishing House was a great advantage, and thus all opposition ceased.

This Conference resolved likewise that an edition of 2000 copies of John C. Reisner's German school-book shall be published. This book afterward passed through several improved editions, has been stereotyped, and is held in very high reputation ; also a new edition of 4000 copies of the smaller hymn-book was ordered to be printed.

It was resolved, that the two Annual Conferences shall hereafter be independent of each other in their proceedings, the contributions for the support of the preachers alone excepted. Up to this time, the Western Conference had been entirely dependent on the Eastern in its proceedings ; the latter body having the power to approve and to reject them, as it deemed best.\*

The contributions toward the support of the ministers, however, remained the joint property of the two Conferences, and were equally divided between them, in proportion to the number of itinerants composing each Conference ; as the support was still less in the Western than in the Eastern Conference, and therefore a certain amount was sent every year from the latter to the former, to make up their deficiency.† Yet the Conferences were required to send each other copies of their proceedings annually. It was also resolved, that the Western Conference shall annually send two delegates to the Eastern, to compose, with three members of the latter body a committee whose duty it shall be, to examine the books that may be laid before it, for publication.

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\*) This arrangement was in its time quite proper, as the Western Conference was quite weak in its beginning and was in many respects dependent upon the Eastern. But the change made by this General Conference was now timely because the Western Conference had become strong enough, and had enough experienced preachers in her ranks to conduct the work independently. The relation of dependency was abolished and in no other case adopted, because ere long the Church had bishops who did exercise a general superintendency, also over the new Conferences.

†) This financial dependency also ceased three years later (1839), when both the Eastern and Western Conference came to an end by the division of the work into three equally privileged Annual Conferences.

The rule in our Discipline, requiring the superintending minister to give recommendations to those members, who move from one circuit to another\* was also established by this General Conference, and perfect liberty of conscience granted to the members of the Society with regard to baptism, both as to who are the proper subjects for baptism, and how this rite is to be administered.

Charles Hammer was elected presiding elder, in the place of William W. Orwig, and Samuel Witt was ordained as deacon.

The time of meeting for the next General Conference was for the first time fixed upon by this body—a practice which has been adhered to ever since. It was to convene in Center Co., Pa., in March, 1839.

General Conference was closed in the usual solemn manner, and the proceedings signed as a token of acquiescence and obedience, by Henry Niebel, Charles Hammer, Samuel Baumgartner, Solomon G. Miller, John G. Zinser, Elias Stoever, Henry Bucks, John Young, Jacob Schnerr, Charles Hesser, John Seybert, William W. Orwig, Philip Wagner, Daniel Brickley, George Brickley, Francis Hoffmann, John J. Kopp, John P. Leib and Daniel Kehr.

The acts and proceedings of this General Conference were of great importance and value to the connection, especially its act with regard to the Printing Establishment and Book-bindery. The effects of this measure have been highly beneficial to the Society, and contributed much to promote its increase. During the first years, the press was almost constantly in operation. Besides our hymn-books, Discipline, a number of Sabbath-school books, etc., the following larger works were also printed at a subsequent period in our Establishment, namely, a German pocket Bible, Rambach's German translation of Collier's Introduction to the Sacred Scriptures, and several works of considerable size for private individuals. In a few years hundreds of thousands of books had proceeded from our Establishment—more, alas! than could be sold. Notwithstanding this, there was sometimes a want of some kind of books in certain places. This, however, was not owing to the Establishment being unable to meet every want of the Church in this respect; but it was the consequence of the unequal distribution of the books; too many being sent to some places, and not enough to others, in consequence of the very deficient book system of the Association in those days. Especially was the cause of Sunday-schools furthered in the connection, by the Establishment, which supplied these schools with the most necessary books. It distributed also at as early a period as the close of the first year of its existence, \$500 of its income to

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\*) This regulation was not intended that our preachers should give certificates to such members as wish to withdraw from the Church under dissatisfaction, or for the purpose of joining another Church. Because of the emigration of many members from the East to the West, it became necessary to give them certificates "from one circuit to another," as the phrase goes, so that they might not be lost to the Church.

both Conferences, for the support of the indigent itinerants, and their poor widows and orphans. This removed the prejudices against the Establishment, which had yet been lingering in many a mind, and secured, in general, a fair reputation for it. At the close of 16 years of its existence, it had distributed \$18,000 among the conferences for said purposes, and increased its own capital to more than \$30,000. Thus, the success and usefulness of the Establishment exceeded by far the most sanguine expectations of its founders, warmest advocates and friends. Truly, the Society ought to be thankful to Almighty God for his rich blessings vouchsafed to this Establishment, and to rejoice that he has done great things for them also in this enterprise.\*

#### § 185. The Year 1837—Progress—Victories.

The Western Conference this year held its session in Green Township, Stark County, Ohio, March 6–11, and the Eastern at New Berlin, Pa., March 27 to April 3rd. Three preachers located and five applicants were received into the itinerancy. The salary of a single preacher amounted to \$56.40.

In the Eastern Conference two new circuits were formed, viz.: Lyken's circuit, out of the western end of Schuylkill, and Dansville circuit, out of the western end of Lake circuit. Although the increase of membership was not as great as in the previous year, yet the work made evident progress, and the Association materially extended its borders.

At this time there prevailed a remarkable spirit among the preachers to extend and enlarge the boundaries of the Church. Many of them made it a special object to seek new appointments, and to extend their sphere of labor more or less each year, no matter how large it already was; although they had a sufficient number of appointments to fill they were not satisfied unless they took up a number of new appointments annually in other parts of the country.†

The presiding elders especially exerted themselves to obtain new preaching points, and above all others John Seybert who then served almost continually as presiding elder. His example induced many others to follow his steps. His district extended over several counties in eastern Pennsylvania, but he enlarged it greatly during his four year's service. We insert his own lucid report on this subject, as follows:—

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\*) The history and development of the Publishing House of the Evangelical Association is of such great interest and importance that it is deemed proper to devote a special section to it at the close of this volume.

†) The author well remembers when the two circuit preachers in making their rounds, met at his father's house, in those years, how they rejoiced when they could report a new appointment somewhere, as if they had found great spoil. They planned, prayed, and labored unceasingly for the salvation of souls, and when conversions took place, their "joy was full."

"As the time is fast approaching, when I must bid farewell to Canaan district, I feel myself inwardly constrained to publish in the '*Botschafter*' a few of those things which the Lord has wrought for us, during the last four years. When I took charge of the district, I found three circuits, viz., Schuylkill, Lebanon, and Lancaster. In Philadelphia there was but a slight beginning of a work of grace. The circuits of Schuylkill and Lebanon, I found in a good condition, and the prospects for conversions were fair; but on Lancaster circuit matters looked gloomy at most of the preaching places, except those in the eastern end, where the prospects for conversions were favorable. As the district was small, I devoted during the first two years part of my time to seeking new preaching places, in the dark regions toward the East and North-east; and God crowned my efforts abundantly, so that our borders were soon enlarged about sixty miles. We then united everywhere, to enlarge our borders, till we succeeded, by the help of God, in extending them so, that there are now six circuits, where four years ago there were but three; and in Philadelphia, where there was but a slight beginning of a work of grace among the Germans, there is now a flourishing, considerable society, and a large Sunday-school; the whole district, on which four years ago but seven itinerants were traveling, is now numbering fourteen. We have succeeded, by the help of God, in penetrating far and wide into the formerly so dark counties of Bucks, Northampton, Lehigh, Monroe, as far as Wayne.

"At Allentown, Lehigh County, the work of grace has also made a beginning, and the prospects for future conversions are good; in Monroe County two new classes have already been formed. Here we had another illustration of what can be accomplished, if the itinerant and local preachers unitedly strive to enlarge their borders, to seek new preaching places, and to proclaim the pure doctrine in dark regions. Oh, that the Lord would increase the zeal of all his anointed servants among us, and in all other Christian denominations, to discharge their duty, until the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea!"\*

The following report from Somerset circuit on which three ministers traveled† during this conference year, shows the zeal of some of the ministers to extend their boundaries.

"Last Spring, when we arrived on this circuit, two of us set out at once for Virginia, in order to obtain new preaching places, as not enough appointments had been given out for us. On our journey, we called at a house and were told by its inmates, that their house was open for religious meetings. We left an appointment, continued our journey, and found entrance at two more places. On our return we preached in the first men-

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\*) *Christliche Botschafter*, Vol. 3, No. 5. One can feel while reading this report what a spirit actuated this ecclesiastical captain. His like was not to be found in all the land!

†) John Young, Aaron Yambert and Benjamin Eply.

tioned house to a large audience. The next time, one went to Virginia through Maryland and found open doors ; also in other places, at which we called, we were received. Some entreated us during the meeting, to preach in their houses also ; and others sent us requests from a distance, so that we have already taken up *sixteen new preaching places*. We also rejoiced, when a number of persons came to our meetings during harvest on week-days, from a distance of seven or eight miles ; and a certain man once said to his laborers, 'Come, let us go to the meeting ; that is better than making hay.' In these new places some seem to have been wounded deeply, and others have begun to seek the Lord in prayer. Although we met with great opposition from ungodly, unconverted parsons, yet the prospects for conversions are favorable. The Lord was with us in our journey, so that the word preached was better received than in those places where it has become a trite subject, and the people do not deem it worth while any more to go a short distance to hear it. But also some of the old places are in a prosperous condition.\*

Many more such examples might be given ; and it is greatly desirable, that this spirit to extend the kingdom of God and to promote the best interests of the Society, would be rekindled among us, and become more general than it has ever been. It is true, there have always been some in our midst, who were filled with this spirit ; but they were generally only the minority.†

In Philadelphia the work progressed remarkably well during this year, under the charge of the beloved and esteemed Charles Hesser. More than a hundred members were received, and notwithstanding the many cares and troubles arising from the building of a new church, everything prospered. Bro. Hesser labored there for two years in succession very satisfactorily ; and after an absence of a little more than a year, nearly two years again. But this year was the most prosperous of his time of service there. The church was dedicated to the service of God on the 1st of October, and Bro. Seybert made the following remarks upon it in the "*Botschafter*":—

"On Sunday, Oct. 1st, our church in Philadelphia was dedicated. The services were continued during the week, and a number of attentive hearers were always in attendance, some of whom were awakened and converted. The house is 60 by 36 ; it is built very plain, but well and conveniently arranged. The basement is divided into a large room for holding prayer-meetings and the Sunday-school, and two smaller rooms for class-meetings ; the upper story forms a very spacious and convenient hall for preaching."

On Lebanon circuit, especially in the town of Lebanon, a glorious revival took place this year, under the charge of Francis Hoffman and Jacob

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\*) *Christliche Botschafter*, Vol. 3, No. 1.

†) This minority is, alas, quite too small.

Vogelbach. With regard to the work in the town, the latter makes the following remarks in a report published in the "*Botschafter*":—

"We held a protracted meeting at Lebanon, from Nov. 24th to December 5th. Here the light of truth has shone for some time in brightness; had the inhabitants made room for it and followed their convictions, most of them would now have the love and life of God in their hearts. But the conditions which Jesus lays down for his followers, to forsake everything, were too hard for many; yet the truth was too powerful, the light too bright, to go backward. The motto finally was, forward! Arrangements were made in churches and school-houses; one step more was taken. May God help to move still more onward! The struggle between light and darkness has come to a happy issue; now it is between life and death, and O that life may prove victorious! Our meeting now fell in the time of the special gracious visitation of God, and we had heavenly times; the believers were melted together in fervent love; they supported the work of God with all their might, and the Lord gave the increase, so that daily such were added as are saved. The number of new converts rose as high as 45. We were often on the point of giving out, under the pressure of our continued exercises which lasted till midnight; yet the nearness of our God was so refreshing to our souls and bodies, that we could endure it. On Tuesday, Dec. 5th, which was the last evening, we enjoyed the most glorious times. Eleven sisters were baptized in the church. All present were pervaded with a feeling of the solemnity and importance of the occasion, heaven seemed to be open over us, and all felt the presence of God. All praying hearts that were present swam in emotions and happy sensations. After this solemn transaction, we held a love-feast, when our Heavenly Father poured out his blessings abundantly upon us. We then invited the mourners, to make the measure of our joys full; and in order to render the glory of this night perfect, God granted to some more mourning souls peace and pardon. His holy Name be praised for it! Now then see, what God has done. Oh! where shall we find words to express it? Though every pulse-beat were praise, it would not suffice! Reader! do thou also help us praise the Lord."

The old Lancaster circuit in Pennsylvania, which, several years before, had been declining very much, was at this time in a very flourishing condition again. Considerable revivals had taken place in different places, and seventy new members were added to its ranks during the year.

On Cumberland circuit, the work of grace still continued to prosper, especially at the Leathart Springs, and in Fishing Creek Valley, as well as in several other places. Also Shenandoah circuit, in Virginia, enlarged its borders, and received a considerable increase during the year.

In the West, the work progressed likewise gloriously in several places.

**In a letter, dated Bucyrus, Sept. 25th, 1837, Bro. Absalom B. Schaefer writes of Crawford circuit, Ohio, as follows:—**

“The work of conversion is still progressing on our circuit, and about 40 souls have already found peace with God. Our camp-meetings were crowned with success. Our circuit has been greatly enlarged. We have received Bro. Fr. Best for our assistant here, and hope to realize a plentiful harvest before we leave these borders.”

**Of Columbiana circuit, Bro. Elias Stoeveer writes in a letter, dated Dec. 26th, 1837, as follows:—**

“On this circuit, many souls have been converted to God this year, and they now rejoice with the people of God for what the Lord has done for them, viz., for having delivered them from the dominion and power of darkness, and translated them into the kingdom of his dear Son.

“In old Harmony, Butler County, Pa., the work of God has spread wonderfully. In the town, a few years ago, matters looked very dark and gloomy, in a religious point of view; as experimental religion was a rare thing among the people. One reason of this was, want of instruction; but God, who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth, has caused the light of the Gospel to shine unto these people also. A few years ago, when the servants of God came to this neighborhood, they were at once kindly received; and it seemed as if no one was filled with prejudices against them. Houses and hearts were opened to them, churches were at their service, and the societies and their pastors came to hear the word of life. Words almost fail to express, how attentively the people listened to the word preached. But, though only the fourth part fell on good ground, yet the divine seed of the word of God soon brought forth fruit. Many took the word to heart, and saw that the life they had hitherto led, was not good. They now came in contrition of heart to God, and by faith in Christ obtained the forgiveness of their sins, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Parents and children praise God for the glorious work which he has begun in and among them.”

#### **§ 186. Beginning of the Work in Illinois.**

In this year a preacher of our Association visited for the first time the State of Illinois; although a number of our members from Pennsylvania had emigrated thither some time before. The first had gone to Chicago and vicinity, in the Fall of 1836; and these were followed by others in the ensuing Spring. At the same time some had also gone to Mount Carmel, Wabash County; where, as it appears from the records at hand, the first conversions took place by means of our ministry. Brother John Butz writes in a letter, dated June 21st, 1837, among other things, the following: “Thus I am like a solitary bird upon the roof, and meet with sore opposition; but the Lord has thus far been with us. Three souls have been converted to God, who had been awakened by our instrumentality;

two of them obtained peace in our prayer-meetings. The Lord alone be praised for it ! ”

These members had come from Lehigh County ; but the others, who had settled near Chicago and vicinity, were from Warren, Pa. As the work mainly took its beginning in the last mentioned part of that State, and thence extended itself, we here insert a somewhat detailed report, received mostly from Bro. John J Esher. He describes the emigration of the members of the Warren society, their journey and arrival in Illinois, as follows :—

“ Late in the Fall of 1836, some of the members of this society emigrated to the far West and settled in and around Chicago, then numbering but 4,000 inhabitants. The following Spring a number of families followed them, who, at their arrival in Illinois, separated into three companies ; the first, which was the most numerous, settled along the river Des Plaines, near Wheeling, Cook County; the second, in and near Naperville of the same county; and the third in Henry County, Illinois ; and thus the foundation was laid of the three societies at these places, which have existed to this day. Before their setting out from Warren, their preacher, Bro. Henry Bucks, advised them, that as soon as they had arrived at their new homes and permanently settled, they should form themselves into classes and elect leaders, till a preacher would visit them. While on their journey, they did not in the least neglect their religious meetings, except when it was absolutely unavoidable. Prayer in the family, prayer and class-meetings and the keeping of the Sabbath, were as exactly and scrupulously observed by them, as before at home. That blessed prayer-meeting is still in fresh remembrance, which they held on board the steamboat. There were about 1100 passengers on board, many of whom crowded around them, and exclaimed with deep emotions : ‘ Truly, these people are Christians indeed ! ’ Thus these members of the Evangelical Association first emigrated to the State of Illinois, bringing along their sanctuary; therefore the Lord was also with them and blessed them.

“ In compliance with the advice of their preacher, immediately after their arrival, they formed themselves into classes, according to the directions of our Discipline, and elected leaders. The class at Des Plaines consisted of 28 members, including a number of persons and families, named : Esher, Ott, Trier, Schally, Krienbuehl, Stanger, Strubler, and Luther ; that at Naperville of about 15 members, named : Esher, Wirth, Gross, Strubler, Knopf, etc.; and that at Rock River of about 10 members, named : Schuler, Arnet and Rink.”

With regard to time, these organizations took place as follows : those at Des Plaines and Naperville, in June, 1837; and that at Rock River, one year later. Thus, before a preacher had come to this part of the country, the order of the Evangelical Association was introduced as completely as it was possible, without the presence of a minister. Prayer-meetings on

Sabbath-day, and during the week, class and extra devotional meetings were regularly held, and, in general, great earnestness was manifested in the cause of religion. The only reasons which induced these people to emigrate from Pennsylvania to this, then but little known, and, to a great extent, still wild section of country, were the sterility of their farms near Warren, and their inability to purchase properties in settled districts of the country, where the soil is good. It was therefore a matter of necessity with them, to look out for homes in a wilderness. They were far from a desire to become wealthy; all they sought was, to make a living with a moderate share of labor.

"The country where our emigrants settled, fully answered their expectations, with but few exceptions; although the greatest part was still uninhabited, and even the few settlements that had been made, had as yet received but few impressions of cultivation, almost everything being yet in its primitive romantic beauty. The many wants and inconveniences that are almost constantly incident to the lives of the first settlers in new countries, were shared by our friends, and that in a high degree, as the great bank swindling took place in those years (1836-1840), in the United States. But, great as these inconveniences were, the settlers made but little account of them, having expected nothing else. They felt, however, far more keenly the want of the privileges of the sanctuary, which they had enjoyed in their former homes. For, besides their own, in those days there was no other German Christian society in the whole northern half of the State of Illinois, nor in the territory of Wisconsin; and there was nowhere divine service held in those parts, in the German language. The prayer-meetings of our people were the first regular religious meetings in that language, in the West. Nor was the state of things in this respect any better among the English settlers. From these facts, it is easy to conceive in what condition, in a religious point of view, the scattered German settlers in and about Chicago must have been. The first effect of this state of things, was an entire disregard of the Sabbath; in consequence of which, ungodliness and vices of various descriptions, as intemperance, fornication, cursing and swearing, cheating, etc., increased to an alarming extent; so much so, that he who excelled in wickedness, was the lion of the day.

"Under these circumstances, the panting of our small Christian band after their religious teachers was continually increasing. They would speak of them day and night, and pray the Lord incessantly, so to order it that one of the preachers would visit them. God also heard their prayers, and as early as July of that year, Bro. Jacob Boas, who was stationed on Miami circuit that year, which extended into the State of Indiana, made his appearance among them, to their inexpressible joy. On seeing Bro. Boas, with whom they had already become acquainted in Pennsylvania, some of them were so greatly surprised, that they could scarcely believe

their own senses, hesitating to decide whether it was his spirit or himself. Never before, we dare say, had a man of God been more welcomed, and never had a preacher of the Gospel caused more joy than Bro. Boas by his appearance among these people. With tears of joy they thanked God, that he had answered their prayers, and not left them destitute, which they had already begun to apprehend.\*

"July 23rd, 1837, after a difficult and dangerous journey of several hundred miles, Bro. Boas arrived safe at Chicago, where he met with some of the young brethren and sisters, that were servants in that place; and the following day he reached Bro. Jacob Esher's sen., at Des Plaines, near Wheeling, Cook County, Illinois, where he was received with ecstasy.

"On the 25th, the third day after his arrival, the friends assembled at 11 o'clock, A. M., and Bro. Boas preached at Bro. Jacob Esher's the first evangelical sermon in German, within what is now the Illinois Conference, from the words of Jesus: 'I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no one taketh from you.' John 16, 22. Great was their joy, caused by the good word of the Gospel; and the Lord blessed his children so abundantly, that they shouted for joy, and it was fulfilled what is written: 'The wilderness shall be glad,' etc.

"Bro. Boas, after having recovered somewhat from his long and tedious journey, went to Naperville, where he was not less welcome than at Des Plaines. Besides these two societies, he also preached at Dunkley's Grove, a new German settlement, situated between Des Plaines and Naperville; yet without any visible effects.

"The first general meeting of the Evangelical Association in the far West, was held by Bro. Boas at Jacob Esher's, sr., near Wheeling, Cook County, Illinois, in September, 1837. This was a time of gracious refreshing for the two societies—that of Des Plaines and that of Naperville. Some conversions took place, and, as usual, Bro. Jacob Boas held a quarterly Conference at this meeting, under a shady oak, on the banks of the Des Plaines river. The members attending this Conference were: Jacob Boas, preacher; Jacob Esher, sen., and Martin Esher, class-leaders; and Joseph Wirth, assistant. Bro. Boas now ratified the election of the class-leaders, that had taken place before his arrival.

"The efforts of Bro. Boas, during his six months' stay there, were crowned with success; but as the charge of the Miami circuit, situated partly in Ohio, partly in Indiana, had been entrusted to him, he felt it his duty to leave them again, about Christmas, with the promise to do all in his power to induce the next conference to send them a minister next Spring,

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\* Bro. Boas had been traveling the year before on Erie circuit, in Pennsylvania, to which Warren belonged; and had made a conditional promise to these people, that should they move to Illinois, he would visit them there. But little did they expect that he would fulfill his promise so soon.

for regular preaching ; for he had satisfied himself at the first view, that this would be a very important field for the Evangelical Association. His efforts at conference were crowned with success ; the State of Illinois was received as a circuit, and one year later the circuit was called Illinois circuit."

In March, 1838, conference had allotted it to Bro. Peter Wiest ; but as one of the other brethren of Ohio Conference was unable to travel on his circuit, Bro. Wiest had to supply his place in Ohio, and so he was prevented from going to his new field of labor. Thus it came, that the infant societies in Illinois were almost a whole year, viz., from the close of December, 1837, to the beginning of September, 1838, without a preacher. This time was almost insufferably long to them, so much so that some of the members often spoke of returning to Pennsylvania, where they would have, at least, their preachers. So great was their desire, that when finally the glad tidings spread : "The preacher has come !" a certain man leaped, praising God with a loud voice ; and this was not an isolated case, but the general feeling among them.

While the societies were without a preacher, the class-leaders had conducted the religious exercises, and managed all other affairs according to the best of their abilities ; and the work of the Lord had prospered among them, and some conversions taken place. They were, however, not without persecution from the world ; but making it a point to be conscientiously honest in all their business transactions, they were, nevertheless, highly respected wherever they were known. This prepared the way for the Gospel, and exerted a very salutary influence.

Bro. Boas, in a report published in the "*Botschafter*" dated Cook Co., Ill., Dec. 2nd, 1837, states the following with regard to his visit to Illinois, and the prospects for our Association there :—

"In obedience to the order of our presiding elder, which was, at the same time, in accordance with my own feelings, I traveled last Summer to the State of Illinois. I left my circuit in the beginning of July, and arrived safely at Chicago, the capital of Illinois on the 23rd. I soon ascertained where the brethren lived, and found them with but little difficulty. When they saw me, they greatly rejoiced and we praised God together for his merciful dealings with us. I immediately gave out appointments, and commenced preaching ; and the Lord poured his blessings abundantly upon us, so that we could truthfully say : 'The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad.'

"There are a great many Germans in this State, but they are somewhat scattered over the country ; yet very fine societies and circuits might be formed. There are as yet but few, and in most places no German preachers at all, although the people are so anxious to hear the Gospel preached unto them. The Germans in this State are, for the most part, Europeans, and are like sheep without a shepherd. Since my arrival, I have preached very

often, and my labors have not been without effect, as some have obtained pardon of their sins by faith in the blood of Christ; others have been powerfully affected, and some persecutors of the children of God and opponents of the truth have been aroused from their lethargy, so that they now acknowledge the work of God and withhold not their assent from it. But as my horse was sick most of the time I was there, I could not travel very far around, and consequently not make the circuit as large as I desired. There are now about seventy of our members there, and still more are constantly arriving. There are prospects, too, that many of the inhabitants of this region will embrace religion."

From the preceding statement it appears, that the work in Illinois took its origin, as it had done in the State of Ohio, by emigration from Pennsylvania; and this emigration was one of the principal causes of the rapid increase of the western Church. Some classes and societies mostly consist of members emigrated from Pennsylvania.

The number of members at the close of the conference year was 7,309 and the increase 844.

#### § 187. Beginning and Progress of the Work in Buffalo, N. Y.

Our Church in Buffalo, N. Y., had a very interesting beginning, which however, commenced already one year previous.

In the year 1836, when Joseph Harlacher served Buffalo circuit, which then belonged to the Eastern Conference, he frequently passed through the city of Buffalo, in order to reach his appointment. He soon ascertained that there lived in Buffalo about 4000 Germans who were like sheep without a shepherd. Finally he heard of a German pastor whose name was Gumbel, who served a small German mission under the auspices of the Presbyterians. He visited this Mr. Gumbel, who received him very kindly and requested him to preach for him, which he did. Mr. Gumbel professed to have experienced the grace of God, but seemed altogether too inexperienced to conduct a revival, and was generally impracticable in his pastoral work. He persuaded Harlacher to preach again in his church, and as he intended to emigrate to the West with a few families, he requested him to take charge of his congregation. Bro. Harlacher reported this request to the next session of the Conference, held at Rebersburg, Pa. (March 28th, 1836.) which then constituted Buffalo a field of labor, and stationed Bro. Harlacher there. He afterward wrote of this, as follows:—

"Perhaps the reader may be able to imagine my feelings when the stationing committee reported that I was appointed to Buffalo, where we had no parsonage, no church, not a single member, and not a dollar of missionary money at my disposal; for then we had no missionary society as yet." Moreover, Bro. Harlacher had shortly before Conference been married to Sister Hetty Hoppel, of Sparta, N. Y., and in view of this fact he makes the following remark: "I have often wondered, how many of

our newly married young preachers in our days would be willing to enter upon such a mission without a missionary appropriation?"

When Bro. Harlacher returned to Buffalo, he found Mr. Gumbel's pulpit vacant and his congregation without a preacher. He then stepped into the pulpit and preached his first sermon as missionary, on the 24th of April, 1836, on the text, Luke 10, 5. 6. He was now regarded as the regular pastor of this small congregation, to whom he preached on Sundays and held prayer-meetings during the week. He received from these people \$86.73 as salary, which was increased to \$100 by a small dividend made by the Conference. Out of this little resource he was to pay house-rent, provisions, etc., at high prices, and as he just began house-keeping he had also to buy furniture—for which the good wife had to yield up her former savings. Bro. Harlacher also opened a German school, which slightly increased the stipend.

To obtain fire-wood, he took the axe and attacked the stumps near the church. And, lo! before the Conference year was up there came a little guest into the family who was so welcome that he was permitted to stay, although there remained only two cents in the treasury and scarcely any provisions in the larder. On that day the presiding elder, Charles Hammer, came, and as he opened his saddle-bags, there appeared a little bundle, which he laid upon the table saying: "Here is a roll of butter for you, sent by Sister Moses Boyer!" That sister lived in Canada, but her daughters had been in Buffalo and had heard Harlacher preach.

During the year a few persons were converted to God, but there was no class formed, for things were not yet ripe for such a step. When Bro. Harlacher was about starting for Conference a young lady called upon him and related with tears of joy that she had been led to God through Harlacher's labors, and handed him some money toward his traveling expenses. This encouragement and contribution came very opportune.

Conference again sent Bro. Harlacher to Buffalo in 1837. He now commenced to hold prayer-meetings in private dwellings, where more people attended than in the church. Some persons were awakened and became seekers of salvation. He now encouraged those attending to pray publicly. Frederick Hess and his wife, a Roman Catholic young couple, came into the prayer-meeting, cried to God for mercy and were among the first who became members of the Evangelical Association in Buffalo. Several persons were converted at a camp-meeting held at Clarence a few miles from the city; when these returned they could not refrain from praising God aloud for his saving mercy. But this caused a great commotion and uproar among the older members of Gumbel's congregation, and they began to oppose this work. The elders and trustees came to Harlacher and requested him to put a stop to this movement, for they regarded it as being disorderly. He replied, however, that he had no right to accede to their request unless they would show him from the word of God that such prayer and praise

were not in accordance with the Scriptures. Thereupon they served written notice upon him, that he was forbidden to preach further in that church, to which he answered, also in writing: "My charge is to preach the Gospel in the city of Buffalo. My calling is from God, and not from men, and I will not cease until my time here has expired. If I cannot have a suitable place I will preach on the street." Still he found the church open next Sunday and preached without disturbance, but the opposition soon broke out publicly. On the following Sunday he found an opponent standing behind the altar, who then sang and prayed and read a sermon, and at the close made the announcement, "that preacher Harlacher was not allowed further to preach in this church, because of the disorder which he had brought into it." Some one in the congregation now arose and said: "I want to know what evil this man has done that he is not to be allowed to preach here?" whereupon confusion arose among those present until Harlacher arose and said, in case they would not let him preach there willingly he would hold worship in his house on that afternoon, and invited the people to attend there, and added a few further remarks, but was interrupted with hard words by his opponent, and then left the church, never to enter it again. This opponent afterward came to a fearful end.

Among those present on that memorable occasion was Martin Lauer, then a lad of 15 years.

A number of seekers of salvation then came to Harlacher's house (Dec. 10, 1837), to whom he preached on Isaiah 35, 10. John Duerr, one of the trustees, had not consented to the movement of the insurgents, for he had already experienced the grace of God; he stood faithfully by Bro. Harlacher, not fearing the persecution which now arose. In after years he removed to Wisconsin, where he remained a faithful member until his death. About this time Bro. Harlacher wrote in his diary: "For a few weeks I have realized the help of God and the witness of the Spirit so clearly that I have been overwhelmed by the love of God, and my heart was filled with joy in the Holy Ghost."

Soon after a house was rented on Spruce street, close by where the first Evangelical Church now stands, and on the following Sunday preaching service was had there.

The Spirit of the Lord wrought with great power in the meeting. On the 20th of Dec. Bro. Chas. Hammer came and stayed over Christmas. On the following Sunday Bro. Jacob Riegel was there. These brethren preached with great power. The house was crowded with eager listeners, and many became powerfully convicted. On Christmas Bro. Hammer preached with great effect and the Sacrament was administered. Some praised God aloud, others cried for mercy, and nearly all shed tears.

On New Year's night a watch-meeting was held, which was something quite new to these people. At midnight all fell upon their knees and spent

some time in solemn stillness before God, until divine power began to work mightily among the people. In this house there was more liberty than in the church, and a number of people were added to the Lord. On the 14th day of January, 1838, new members were received for the first time, when thirty-seven persons joined the Church, who were then formed into a class. This was properly the founding of the first Evangelical congregation in Buffalo.

At the close of his two years of service, in the Spring of 1838, Bro. Harlacher wrote as follows: "Upon Easter we again had a 'big' meeting. During eight days previous I had preached daily. The weeping and praying of penitents became quite general, especially so when we celebrated the Lord's Supper on Easter Sunday. On Monday I preached my farewell sermon and immediately departed from this congregation. There was such deep feeling and commotion among the people as I had never seen before. Some shed tears of repentance, others of sorrow, and still others of joy. We now had a membership of more than fifty, nearly all converted persons."

During the two years following, this church was served in connection with the great Buffalo circuit, and had to pass through many trials. Afterward a station was formed and served by Frederick Kroecker for two years, under whose labors the work was greatly blessed. At the expiration of Kroecker's term (1842) the membership numbered 91, divided into five classes.

Bro. Martin Lauer writes with reference to these primitive times, that persecution by the unconverted was very vehement, but the earnestness, determination and joy in the service of God among the members was greater still. A little church was built. "When the time for worship arrived the members were usually all present. It was well understood that all class-members attend prayer-meetings; if the weather was unfavorable, the road muddy, and the night rainy and dark, they took lanterns and went with *light in their hearts*, in good time to the meeting. The prayer-meetings were usually victorious, and conversions were not limited to protracted meetings. For a long time there were penitents in nearly every prayer-meeting and most of the conversions took place in them. The members were plain in their dress, especially the sisters, and more particularly the unmarried ones!"

#### § 188. Decease of Several Preachers.

During this Conference year the Association lost three very useful local preachers by death, viz.: John Thomas of Wayne County, Ohio, J. Philip Breidenstein of Lebanon County, Pa., and Andrew Yeakel of Lehigh County, Pa.

John Thomas had for many years been a preacher of the Association, Mr. Albright himself having signed his first license to preach the Gospel.

His death was caused by a terrible accident. He was caught by a threshing machine while in motion, lost his arm, and mortification taking place, he died a few days after, in full assurance of eternal life, aged fifty-four years.

J. Philip Breidenstein had been for thirty years a member of the Evangelical Association, and had served for 25 years as a local preacher. He was a pious, devoted man, and a true follower of Christ. Though in his latter years he seldom preached, yet his life and conduct among his fellowmen was a constant sermon, exerting a very salutary influence on many of them. He had taken an active part in promoting the interests of the connection and was always a strong pillar in the Association. During his sickness he awaited his departure with composure—which occurred on January 22nd, 1838.

Andrew Yeakel had been a preacher among the Schwenkfelders in his earlier years in and about Upper Milford, Lehigh County, Pa., and had been universally esteemed for his uprightness and honesty. But seeing the moral deterioration of his Church, he bore testimony against it. He, with some of his fellow believers, united with the Evangelical Association. He met with much opposition from some of his former brethren; however, he did not yield to discouragement, but was zealous in promoting the Kingdom of God and the welfare of his fellow-men. He was a very conscientious, devout, and pious man, and was altogether a character of rare excellence. He was both in conduct and doctrine a worthy example for the faithful; diligent and scrupulous in his official and domestic duties, as well as in his temporal occupation. He suffered for a long time with consumption, but was fully resigned to the will of God. He died in great peace and in the full hope of eternal life, on April 6th, 1837, in the fifty-first year of his age.

Although Andrew Yeakel was not classically educated, he was a deep, sound theologian. His sermons were well digested and carefully arranged; and his expositions of Scripture were excellent. He was very skillful in the use of similitudes for the illustration of spiritual truths. As for instance, when he wanted to illustrate how God, who searches the heart, shows to his people the impurities or spots still lurking in their nature, by trials and temptations, he took a glass filled with water, at the bottom of which was a little sediment of dust or earth. As long as the glass was left alone, the water in it would appear very clear and pure, but when taken up and shaken, the impure sediment would rise and give some turpidity to the water. Thus it becomes evident that some impurity had been there. Even so trials and crosses will bring to light what remains of moral depravity still exist, and show why entire sanctification is necessary; or he would say: A room has been swept and garnished, so that, in comparison with its former condition, it may be regarded as clean, yet if more light is let into it, and some one will use the broom freely, then innumerable particles of dust will

be seen flying in the sunbeams pouring into the room. Thus the regenerated person may justly be regarded as having been "sanctified in Christ Jesus," but when the clearly shining and deeply searching word of God is applied to his heart and life, and the Lord with the besom of trials sweeps through his soul, there will appear in the revealing light of God, many particles of dust and the necessity of entire sanctification will become very clear and urgent in the consciousness of the believer.

Thorough repentance and sound conversions he regarded as main points. His sermons were full of unction, and left deep impressions. He rejoiced greatly in the prosperity of the work of God in the Evangelical Association. On his death-bed he gave a considerable contribution to the proposed Publishing House of the Evangelical Association.\*

### § 189. Introduction of the Missionary Cause.

Both Conferences held their sessions again in March; the Western began its sessions on the 5th, in Jackson Township, Wayne County, Ohio, the Eastern on the 28th, at Orwigsburg, Pa. Seven of the itinerants located, and six were admitted on trial, viz.: Wm. Mentz, John Rosenberger, Fr. Kroecker, A. Longsdorf, S. Krall and Joseph Hummel.

Canaan district, of the Eastern Conference, was divided, and the Eastern part of it called Philadelphia district. A new circuit was also formed in the Eastern Conference, viz.: Womelsdorf circuit; and two in the Western Conference, viz.: Franklin and Illinois circuits.

This year was not only highly blessed, but it forms another epoch in the history of our Church, especially by the awakening of a missionary spirit and the founding of the first missionary societies in our midst. Both the Missionary Society in the Eastern Conference and the Parent Board of Missions of the Association were founded this year, besides a number of societies auxiliary to the Missionary Society in the Eastern Conference.

It is true, the Association had cultivated a missionary spirit from its very beginning, and often sent out ministers, in order to visit spiritually neglected communities, to preach unto them the Gospel of peace, and to introduce the use of the means of grace among them. Objects of its solicitous care were also those societies, who indeed had pastors, but such as lived with their members in carnal security, sins and errors, and were entire strangers to experimental religion. In this way the Association was doing much already for the salvation of many souls. But this was done only occasionally; when, for instance, there was an abundance of preachers; when a section of country was situated very conveniently near a circuit; or when

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\*) The author saw this "Uncle" when near his death and heard him express his living hope of eternal life. Among other impressive remarks, he said that: "Ein gutes Gewissen, ist ein sanftes Sterbekissen"—i. e. "A good conscience is a soft dying pillow." His conscience rested in the blood of Christ.

members had removed to distant parts of the country, soliciting a visit from their ministers. But systematic arrangements for collecting missionary contributions, and sending out missionaries every year, had not yet been introduced. And, indeed, the necessary acquaintance with the cause of missions had heretofore been wanting with the greater part of our ministers and members; the condition of Pagan and non-Christian nations especially was partially known to but few; and even the true religious wants of the greater part of Christendom were not properly understood and laid to heart.

Nor had our Periodical as yet taken up the subject of missions, and missionary sermons were something altogether unknown in the Society. The principal cause of the introduction of the cause of missions into our Association just at this time, was the "*Basler Missions Magazin*," (a missionary magazine published in Europe). Bro. John Seybert had purchased a considerable number of volumes of said work, from a certain person in Blooming Grove, Lycoming County, Pa., and presented them to the Publishing House for the use of the editor. The perusal of this work aroused a missionary spirit in the editor, and filled his heart with zeal for this sacred cause. The first volumes of said work especially, affected the editor powerfully; and as his heart became full of this good cause, the subject often formed the topic of conversation in circles of friends, and the wish was ventured, that something might be done in this cause also by our Association. The influence of said magazine, and the many glorious reports of awakenings and conversions on the different fields of labor of our brethren, which were published at this time in the Periodical, induced the editor to pen an article, which appeared in the last number of the second Vol. of the paper, headed: "Men ought to extol and magnify the work of God." This article alludes to, and encourages, such an enterprise, without, however, expressly naming the cause of missions.

Just at the time when the Eastern Conference was in session, which founded the first missionary society of the Association, there appeared another editorial article on this subject, headed: "*The Christians and the Heathen*," which in the beginning gives a brief statement of the moral condition of the whole human family, and then inculcates the duty of the Christians to preach the Gospel to every creature.

This appeal and the many encouraging reports of revivals and the extension of the Kingdom of God, that appeared from time to time in the Periodical—the many inquiries and demands for preachers of the Evangelical Association, in different places—especially also the many openings for ministers of our Church, in the principal maritime cities and larger inland towns, and other places, though they had not directly appealed to us, to proclaim to them the Gospel—all these causes combined, led to the founding of missionary societies and the systematic support of the cause of missions in the Association.

**§ 190. Formation of the First Missionary Society.**

At the session of the Eastern Conference, March 28th to April 4th, 1838, the first Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association was organized upon motion of William W. Orwig—who at this time was the recognized leader of the enterprises in the Church—the Conference organized itself as a Missionary Society for the purpose of making arrangements and providing means for the promotion and spread of the Gospel of Christ. A committee was appointed to draft a constitution for this purpose. This committee reported the following constitution, which was then adopted.

We insert this constitution entire as a very interesting document, showing what views those brethren entertained in this matter.

**CONSTITUTION.**

*Article 1.* This Society shall be called: *The German Evangelical Missionary Society of North America.*

*Art. 2.* The object of this society shall be to make arrangements and provide means, to extend and promote the kingdom of God, by missionaries.

*Art. 3.* Every member shall annually contribute an optional sum, for the support of the society.

*Art. 4.* For the transactions of the business of this society, a president and a vice-president, a secretary and an assistant secretary, and a treasurer, shall be annually elected.

*Art. 5.* In addition to these officers, four members of the society shall be selected, who, with the officers, shall constitute a committee, to transact the necessary business during the interval of the annual meetings. The majority of this committee shall form a quorum, to transact business.

*Art. 6.* All superintending preachers of the Evangelical Association, shall be authorized agents to establish auxiliary societies, and to receive moneys in order to hand them over to the treasurer.

*Art. 7.* All demands on the treasurer must be accompanied with an order signed by the president and secretary.

*Art. 8.* The members of this society are to meet annually in the place where the Annual Conference session takes place, in the evening before the opening of Conference.

*Art. 9.* This society shall be authorized, by a majority of votes, to alter or to amend this constitution from time to time.

The following brethren were then elected as officers by a majority of votes of the Society.

WILLIAM W. ORWIG, President.

JOHN P. LEIB, Vice-President.

JACOB VOGELBACH, Secretary.

CHARLES HAMMER, Assistant Secretary.

THOMAS BUCK, Treasurer.

Select Committee members, PHILIP WAGNER, FRANCIS HOFFMAN, JACOB SCHNERR and JOSEPH M. SAYLOR.

It was then resolved that a voluntary collection be taken up, which amounted to \$26.50.

The organization of this Society and its object and constitution were published in the Church paper, with additional remarks with reference to the cause of missions whereby a missionary spirit was awakened in many places in the Church. Many smaller societies, auxiliary to the Conference Missionary Society, were established, and contributions from other sources were received. Thus *five hundred* dollars were raised the very first year, although no missionaries had as yet been sent out by the Society. The missionary spirit having been aroused, promising fields for missions were looked for, and at the next session of the Eastern Conference, it was resolved to establish four missions which was forthwith carried out. From Canada, which several of our ministers had already visited, came a strong and very touching appeal for ministers of our Church. This appeal was sent for publication in our Church paper, by a highly respected and influential man, H. W. Peterson, and, accompanied by a few introductory remarks by the editor, it was published in the issue of September, 1838.

Thus the missionary work assumed a definite shape in the Evangelical Association in A. D. 1838, has since proved itself a great blessing to thousands of souls, and has contributed very much toward the more rapid increase and extension of the Association.

Since the Eastern Conference had thus made a beginning, it was expected that other Conferences would follow this example in the future and some of the leading men in the Church saw the utility and necessity of forming a *Principal Missionary Society*, in order to secure a general co-operation in this good cause, instead of dividing the strength of the Church by independent Conference mission-work.

#### § 191. Formation of the Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association.

The subject of forming such a Society was frequently discussed, and the conviction became clearer and stronger that it should be done. Finally on Christmas, 1838, during a protracted meeting at New Berlin, Pa., a convention was held in the house of Rev. William W. Orwig, which consisted of a number of preachers and members. At this meeting the matter was fully considered, and finally a resolution passed to make a beginning, and the following committee appointed to draft a constitution: John Seybert, George Brickley and William W. Orwig.

On the first day of March, 1839, a second meeting was held at the house of John S. Dunkel, in Buffalo Township, Union County, Pa., where the constitution drafted by said committee was presented and unanimously adopted. And as this document is of historical value, we insert it here as follows :—

*Article 1.* This society, called "*The Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association of North America*," has for its object to enable the Annual Conferences of the Evangelical Association, in a more effectual manner, to extend their missionary operations in the United States and in other places.

*Art. 2.* Each subscriber, paying annually \$2.00 shall be a member of this society; and who at any time pays \$25.00, shall be a member for life.

*Art. 3.* The officers of this society shall be: a president, three vice-presidents, a secretary, a corresponding and recording secretary, and a treasurer, who, with fourteen managers, shall form a board to transact the business of the society. All of these must be members of the Evangelical Association, and shall be annually elected by the society.

*Art. 4.* The Board shall have power to make by-laws for the regulation of its own business, and to fill vacancies that may occur during the year; it shall also lay before the society, at its annual meeting a report of its proceedings and funds, and likewise before the General Conference an exact report of all its proceedings and receipts and expenditures, during the past four years.

*Art. 5.* Ordained ministers of the Association, being members of the society, shall be, *ex officio*, members of the board.

*Art. 6.* The annual meeting of the society for the election of officers and managers, shall be held on the third Tuesday in April, at New Berlin, Union County, Pa.

*Art. 7.* The president, or in his absence, the one of the present vice-presidents standing first on the list, and in the absence of the three vice-presidents, any member that may be appointed by those present, shall preside over all meetings of the society and the Board.

*Art. 8.* Twenty-one members shall form a quorum at all meetings of the society, and eleven at those of the Board; the minutes of each meeting shall be signed by the president.

*Art. 9.* It is recommended, that within the boundaries of each Annual Conference, a conference missionary society be established, as a branch of this society, with auxiliary societies on the different circuits, under such regulations as the conferences may see proper to lay down. Each of these conference missionary societies shall annually send a copy of its annual report to the corresponding secretary of this society, and inform the treasurer of the same body of the amount of the funds collected for the support of the missionary cause; this amount shall be placed at the disposal of the treasurer of the parent society, under the provisions of the following article.

*Art. 10.* The treasurer of this society shall, under the direction of the Board, annually or oftener, as the Board may deem necessary, inform the bishop or bishops of the financial affairs, and of those amounts that may be

drawn for the purposes specified by this constitution; and according to this information, the bishop or bishops shall be authorized to draw from the treasurer any sum within the specified amount, that may be deemed necessary by the missionary committees of the Annual Conferences for the support of the missionaries under their care; with this proviso, however, that no more be allowed to any missionary, than is allowed to the other itinerants for their support. And whenever a bishop draws money from any treasurer of one of the conference missionary societies, he shall at once inform the treasurer of the parent society thereof; each missionary shall also transmit to the corresponding secretary a quarterly report in writing, on the state and the prospects of the mission under his care. No missionary that has not been appointed by one or the other of our Annual Conferences or by our bishops, shall draw support from the funds of this society.

*Art. 11.* This constitution shall be subject to our next General Conference; and if the object of the society be approved, the constitution shall, in future, not be altered, except by the General Conference on a recommendation of the Board.

This constitution having been approved, the convention proceeded and formed itself into a society, by the election of officers and managers for the present year, as follows:—

JOHN SEYBERT, President.

JAMES BARBER, First Vice-President.

DANIEL BERGER, Second Vice-President.

GEORGE BRICKLEY, Third Vice-President.

S. G. MILLER, Secretary.

W. W. ORWIG, Recording and Corresponding Sec.

JOHN S. DUNKEL, Treasurer.

**Managers:** Chas. Hammer, Henry Thomas, Philip Schmid, John Kaufman, Dr. I. Brugger, Martin Dreisbach, Martin D. Reed, John Rohland, Philip Wagner, Mich. F. Maize, Isaac Eyer, John Maize, Leonard Gebhart, Sebastian Mosser.\*

This was the origin of the missionary society in the Evangelical Association. Soon after it had been established, General Conference met in Center Co., Pa., and in conformity with the last article of the constitution, this document was laid before that body, which approved and confirmed the same as well as the establishment of the society. Thus this society became the principal missionary society of the Evangelical Association; and the missionary society of the Eastern Conference, which had been established a year before, altered its constitution at its next annual meeting, and, together with its auxiliary societies, united with this as a branch, which

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\*) These managers were nearly all lay-members. Rev. W. W. Orwig says that this appointment of lay-members was intended to awaken a greater interest among the members in the missionary work, without any purpose as to *lay-delegation*.

example was afterward followed by the other Annual Conferences. Subsequently there were important alterations made in the constitution, as may be seen by comparing the above with the present constitution of the society.

On Monday, January 17th, 1839, the Board of the society held its first meeting at New Berlin, Pa., in order to adopt by-laws to the constitution, and rules to regulate its business transactions. It was also resolved, that notice shall be given of the founding of the society in the *Botschafter*, and that its constitution, together with the circular, and an address of the Board, drawn up by a committee, shall be published in said paper.

These appeals and other communications which appeared in the Church paper as well as copious extracts from reports of the principal missionary societies of Europe and America, and in the following year the reports from our own first missionaries, exerted a powerful influence upon the entire Association and intensified the missionary zeal still more. The preachers generally took a deep interest in the matter, delivering missionary sermons, forming auxiliary societies, and laboring diligently to interest a still larger circle of friends in this cause, many of the members contributed liberally toward its support. Yet, like other good enterprises, this cause also encountered some opposition in the Church. It was a new thing among us, and there were people in our midst who considered it safer to cling to the "old ways", and who for that reason opposed all new measures about to be introduced, especially such as came into contact with their purses. Others said they could not see the necessity for such a laborious and expensive effort to send forth missionaries, etc. Yet the cheering results of our missionary operations in the very first years, silenced all objections and excuses in a short time.\*

#### § 192. Against the Misuse of Tobacco.

The Eastern Conference at the session above indicated (1838) passed the following resolution :—

*"Resolved, That the general use of tobacco, as it is customary in our days, is a great evil, and that we unanimously protest against it."*

However improper and extravagant this resolution may have appeared to some in those days, yet similar resolutions have since been passed by other ecclesiastical bodies. Our paper raised at that time, and still more after the passage of the above resolution, its voice in earnest against the evil, and not without success. Many were convinced by the sound arguments against the prevailing use of tobacco, and renounced it, some of whom have remained faithful to their resolutions, while others, alas!

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\* ) It is but just to say that beside John Seybert, the Rev. William W. Orwig was the chief mover in these beginnings of the Missionary Society, and he was also in fact the compiler of its constitutions.

relapsed into the evil practice. In subsequent times, some of the other conferences passed similar resolutions.

But many members of the Evangelical Association, as well as of other Christian denominations, still indulge in this bad practice; and while many papers, that are devoted only to the secular improvement of mankind, are almost constantly protesting against it, the religious press is almost entirely silent on this subject. One of the principal reasons, why this evil has thus far not been more effectually combated in the Society, is, because *some* of our preachers are still addicted to it. And, as in many other things, so also in this, many appeal to the old brethren, the fathers of the Association; not considering, that in their times that amount of light was not thrown on this subject, nor on the cause of temperance, which we enjoy in our days; and that our ancestors are, consequently, more excusable in these things than we. Moreover, some of the best men of the Society have always been opposed to this evil, in word and deed; and of these none has, at any time, whether formerly or lately, combated these two evils with more perseverance and resolution, than Bro. John Seybert, especially the evil of intemperance, or the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage. Privately and publicly, in sermons and lectures, he has opposed this monster evil. Another inexorable opponent of the use of tobacco within our Church was Henry Niebel. How he in his sermons sometimes dealt with those that were addicted to the misuse of tobacco—and he generally did it with good effect! Hence he was greatly feared by them; and it was but seldom that one suffered himself to be caught by him in the act. Some followed his example in attacking the evil, but none perhaps could do it so wittily and with such good grace, as he generally did it. At general and camp-meetings he painted the misuse of tobacco in such horrible colors, that many of the guilty, during the sermon, threw away their pipes, cigars, and tobacco, and at once forsook the evil. These sudden conversions, however, did not always prove lasting.

This Conference also resolved, that none of our preachers shall deal in tobacco, similar to the disciplinary rule of our Church forbidding the traffic in intoxicating liquors and in slaves.

#### § 193. Blessed Camp-meetings and Awakenings.

The work, as might be expected from the awakened missionary spirit in the Connection, extended itself during the year in many directions; and in some places, where it had formerly begun and taken a solid footing, glorious revivals took place. All things considered, this was one of the most blessed years up to that time. The camp-meetings, especially, were, on the whole, very productive of good, as well as some of the quarterly and protracted meetings. For the confirmation of what has been said, some extracts from reports of camp-meetings are subjoined. Bro. Daniel Berger

reported through the paper of a camp-meeting, that took place on Center circuit, among other things as follows:—

“On Monday, September 3rd, our camp-meeting began, in George’s Valley, Center County, Pa., on the land of Bro. J. Falget, and lasted till the following Monday. The number of tents was 32, and the beginning of the meeting was very good. As early as the second day, conversions took place, and the meeting was constantly increasing in interest. At every invitation penitents came forward, in order to plead for mercy and the pardon of their sins, and God imparted his blessing abundantly.

“The sermons were remarkably blessed and full of unction. The servants of God were in such a degree filled with courage and power, that I can say, to the honor and glory of God, that I had never before attended a camp-meeting, where the preaching was from first to last, so plain and powerful as at this; many of the hearers have said the same. Others that embraced religion during the meeting, afterward confessed that they often thought their hearts would burst under the mighty power by which God accompanied his word. \* \* \* \*

“On the last evening the manifestations of God’s power were such, that sinners broke down and cried for mercy; and without being invited, mourners came forward to the altar, in order to pray and be prayed for. And when the time of the evening sermon had arrived, a number of penitent and contrite sinners lay round the altar on their knees and faces, crying to God for mercy and the pardon of their sins, so that another sermon was considered altogether unnecessary. The mourners were then counseled and prayed with, till most of them found peace and were translated into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Now followed a scene of heavenly shouting of the children of God, to which the words of the German poet can justly be applied:—

*‘Hier freut sich ein Jüngling, der Jesum gefunden;  
Dort singet ein alter Verehrer der Wunden;  
Hier lobt eine Seele mit stillem Vergnügen;  
Dort jauchzet ein Anderer und möchte wohl fliegen.’*

“Shortly before parting, all that were desirous to join the Society, were invited to become members, on condition that they were resolved to renounce all sins, and to lead holy lives, in accordance with the Word of God; twenty-seven persons came forward, and had their names recorded in the book of the Church.—The exact number of the converts at this meeting, we cannot give; but as far as we could ascertain, it was about fifty. To the Lord alone be all the praise!”

Of another camp-meeting, held on Mansfield circuit, in the State of Ohio, Bro. Absalom B. Schaefer reported as follows:—

“Our second camp-meeting began on the 20th of August, on the land of Bro. Henry Kiplinger, in Wayne County, Ohio. Eight itinerant and ten local preachers, eighty families who dwelt in about forty tents, and a con-

siderable number of friends from a distance without tents, in all about 210 were present, most of whom were on the spot at the beginning, and had come, as I believe, in the fear of God, in order to do his work with solemnity. Although the meeting was very large, and increased daily, yet the attention and conduct of the people were remarkably good, so much so that not the least disturbance took place. It almost appeared as if all were on the side of God. The effect was general, from beginning to end; after almost every sermon, the mourners were invited, and each time more or less came forward. At the first invitation, about twenty-five persons presented themselves at the altar, and at every subsequent one between forty and fifty. On the last evening, sixty-eight came forward at the first invitation, and afterward many among the crowd fell on their knees, crying to God for mercy. It is impossible to give the exact number of new converts at this meeting, but it may have been between 60 and 70, most of whom united with us forthwith. Others have since declared, that they would join us at the first opportunity. We can indeed say, '*This was a time of the Son of man.*'"

Several other camp-meetings of this year were also remarkably blessed and efficacious, as may be seen from the reports of them in our Church paper.

Old York circuit, which had been thoroughly tried by a variety of vicissitudes, was refreshed this year, under the pastoral care of John Sensel and William Heim, with an almost general revival, especially in Canadochley and near Loganville; in point of newly received members, it ranked highest in the East. Cumberland circuit was still progressing. Centre circuit also enjoyed revivals in different parts, principally in Sugar Valley, and in several other places.

Columbia circuit, under the charge of the Brethren Jacob Barber and Benjamin Epley, was blessed with an almost general revival, especially in the neighborhood of New Columbia, Union County, Pa., at Loyalsack, etc. On Lycoming circuit, glorious revivals took place.

In order to enable the reader to pass a fair judgment on the amount of good accomplished in some places by our ministers, we here insert two reports, from some parts of the last two mentioned circuits, written by brethren residing in said places, for publication in the Church paper in 1839; they are as follows:—

"REPORT OF THE WORK OF GOD IN LOYALSACK, PA.

Encouraged by the cheering news of the work of God, through the columns of the "*Christliche Botschafter*," I take up my pen in order to inform you of what the Lord has been pleased to do for us in this wilderness.

"When we take a retrospective view of the condition we were in, before the servants of God came to us, we can truly say, 'The Lord has done great things for us.' The people here are of different denominations, and ungod-

liness had almost reached its climax ; cursing, swearing, lying, tippling, desecrating the Sabbath, etc., were the order of the day, and true Christianity a rare article. We indeed had preachers, but they were such as the prophet Micah, 3d chapter, describes : They were concerned for the wool, not for the sheep. In vices and immorality they took the lead. In short, our condition was lamentable, till about six years ago, the Lord had pity on us, and sent us his servants.

“Bro. Seybert was the first who preached here ; from that time the servants of God have labored very earnestly among us. At first it seemed as if all were anxious to fall in with the good work, till about three years ago conversions took place, when the devil was aroused, and rushed upon the children and servants of God with all his might, the priest being the leader. And when the Brethren Berger and Sindlinger formed a class here of ten members, Satan commenced anew, through his servants, to calumniate, scold, and rail against us, as if we were reprobates ; the cause of this was what Peter writes, 1. Epistle, 4, 4.

“From that time we have held prayer-meetings, and endeavored to work out our souls’ salvation. The work of conversion stood still for some time, but the slander and persecution of the children of God went on without interruption ; but blessed be God, who knoweth how to deliver those that are his. Last Summer, under the superintendence of the Brethren Barber and Epley, the work began again to extend itself rapidly. We also held two general meetings, at which Bro. Seybert assisted us. Several of the strongholds of Babylon gave way, and a considerable number of precious souls were converted to God, so that we now have a society here of 23 members, who are determined to work out together their souls’ salvation. Many others are in the net of the Gospel, the light shines with increased brightness, and ungodliness of every kind, especially drunkenness, has considerably decreased. A tavern-keeper said, that where he used to sell five barrels of liquor, he now scarcely sold one. Thus our country has been greatly improved, since the pure doctrine of the Gospel is preached here. We can say of a truth, with the poet :—

*‘Ob Teufel und Hölle gewüth’t und gekracht,  
So wurden doch Seelen zu Jesu gebracht ;  
Ob Beelzebub Pfeilen mit Macht auf uns schoss,  
So fielen doch Säulen von Babylon los.’*

May the Lord grant us grace to remain faithful to him till death !  
Amen. J. G. BERTSCH.

Loyalsack, February 16, 1839.

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Dunstown, Feb. 18th, 1839.

Grant me the privilege to inform you, through the columns of the *Botschafter*, of what the King of kings has done for us in our new settlement. It was five years last September, since I came from Germany to this

settlement. There were then but few converted persons to be found in this neighborhood ; but the Lord, in his infinite mercy, has been pleased to rouse some of us out of our lethargy, and to lead us to true repentance. We have now heaven already here on earth ; our class consists of thirty-seven members, twelve of whom have been converted this year. We frequently have glorious times together ; the wilderness and the solitary place have been made glad. Fathers and mothers, some of whom are already ripening for the grave, who but four or five years ago came from Germany, have been accepted in the eleventh hour. Yes, dear brethren and sisters, we have reason to thank God for having sent his faithful servants into our neighborhood, who have thus far visited us so regularly. I have no doubt, many of this region will yet thank them in eternity, for their toil and care. We thank God also, that the *Christliche Botschafter* has found its way to our part of the country ; for it has already effected a vast amount of good, as many a house has been opened to it already, where it can teach and preach ; and I hope, that many more houses will follow the example.

My dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, pray for us that our merciful Father may grant us grace to persevere steadfastly to the end. The Lord's work prospers in our region ; our meetings are blessed, the Master himself is often in our midst, so that old and young rejoice together in praising the Lord. May our Heavenly Father be our guide during life, and eventually bring us, with all blood-washed souls, to his everlasting kingdom, is my prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

I remain your brother in Christ,

JOHN BROBST.

These are two out of the many instances of the great success that attended the labors of our itinerants. Wherever they found admittance, great moral changes for the better were effected by their simple preaching of the unadulterated truth, owned and blessed of Almighty God. But, notwithstanding these glorious results of their labors, they were foully derided almost in every place where they began to labor, by cold clergymen and hardened and ignorant nominal Christians, as false prophets and deceivers, that ought to be guarded against.

Had not the opposition on the part of the clergy been so powerful, the fruit of their labors would have been still more abundant. In some parts of the country, the people had been filled with such strong prejudices against our preachers, by their pastors, that for a long time they had but few hearers ; and only when the effects of their labors became visible by the thorough conversions and evident reformation of individuals, who had been great sinners, people commenced to attend in greater numbers, and to hear and judge for themselves. But as soon as this was done, glorious changes for the better generally took place, and some of the most respectable and influential Church-members of those cold teachers were generally among

the first converts and friends of the itinerants. By and by the influence of our itinerants became so strong in some places, that all railing and slandering of their enemies could harm them no more. It was then that the other preachers commenced to imitate their method and manner of proceeding to some extent, in order to prevent the people from leaving their churches.

#### § 194. Further Extension of the Work.

In the Eastern part of the State of Pennsylvania, the work continued to spread, especially in the Counties of Lehigh, Northampton, and Bucks. In Allentown things went on very well, and a church-edifice was built there and dedicated during this year; and another was built in Upper Milford. In Philadelphia the work progressed finely, and continued to become more firmly established. The society at New Berlin, having had to complain for a long time of spiritual barrenness, was visited this year with a gracious visitation, to the awakening and conversion of a considerable number of precious souls, who were added unto the Lord. The old members also were quickened anew, and filled with more courage to prosecute their journey to heaven.

In the Western Conference, especially on the circuits of Mansfield and Sandusky, some conversions took place during this year. At Liverpool, Medina County, Ohio, where in 1834 the first class had been formed by Bro. Henry Bucks, consisting of ten members, which, however, had afterward been almost dissolved again, it pleased God this year to bless the labors of Bro. Absalom A. Schaefer, who was stationed on the circuit, so abundantly that the work was powerfully revived, and many souls were converted and added to the Church. The year following, when the brethren Aaron Yambert and John Hall were stationed there, the society was visited with another out-pouring of divine grace, during a general meeting in September, at which nearly thirty souls were converted. Though this society has since that time been subject to a variety of trials and siftings, yet the Lord has still his faithful witnesses there, who serve him in spirit and in truth, and their conduct proves their conversion to have been a genuine work of God. This society has also furnished a number of candidates for the ministry, whose labors have been owned and blessed of the Lord.

From a report of Sandusky circuit, where Bro. Peter Getz was stationed this year, it appears that even as late as that time, the preachers of the Evangelical Association, especially in the West, had to labor harder in many places and to submit to greater inconveniences, than in our days. The report in question is as follows:—

“Our camp and general meetings during this year have, on the whole, been greatly blessed, and the grace of God has accompanied our labors to such an extent, that a considerable number of persons have been converted, who are now working out their souls’ salvation. Yet, I am of opinion that

more good might have been accomplished, if the circuit were not so large. Some time ago, a communication appeared in the *Botschafter* from Bro. Zinser, having reference to the difficulties and inconveniences of such extensive circuits, which I read with great delight; for I can say from my own experience, that the remarks of the brother are true. The circuit on which I have been traveling this year, contains 300 miles in circumference, with 35 appointments. Thus the journeys are necessarily long, and also very difficult, owing to the country being new and the roads bad, so that the horse has sometimes to wade up to his knees in water and morass. The distance from one appointment to another being often from 20 to 30 miles, and the roads bad, the preacher is obliged to travel the whole day, and often does not arrive until the congregation has assembled and is waiting for him. And think you, that after such a long and fatiguing journey, he is fit to preach? Since I have been traveling in these parts of the country, I was frequently compelled to spend the day on the road in the severest cold, and when I reached my appointment, I had scarcely any time for secret prayer, and no other closet than the snow-clad wilderness. And still some find fault with the preacher for not visiting them, although he frequently does not find time enough to read two or three chapters of the Bible during the whole week. I do not wish to complain, but think matters could be greatly improved. Many of our old preachers would, undoubtedly, be in the field, were they not compelled, by the want of an adequate support, to stay at home. Oh, that our boundaries of Ohio could be supplied with the necessary number of ministers! Now, though a married preacher on such an extensive circuit visits his family, that is from 100 to 200 miles off, but two or three times during the year, yet much time is lost thereby, and the circuit does not receive its proper attention. The consequence is, that not by far that amount of good is realized, which could be accomplished if the arrangements were better and the number of ministers larger.”\*

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\*) In the vicinity of the Hope Church, in Wayne County, Ohio, where a number of Alsations and other immigrants had settled, the work commenced in the year 1837, of which we here insert a summarized report with reference to its beginning and continuation, as furnished us by Rev. George F. Spreng: “In the year 1837 John Radenbach, who had been converted a year before, asked Father John Grimm whether he was willing to allow an Evangelical preacher to preach in his house. Grimm gave the desired permission. Radenbach came there with a local preacher, named Jacob Hassler and the people came together full of curiosity to see and hear a “converted man,” for such an one they believed never to have seen. He read a well known hymn, ‘*Spar deine Busse nicht*’ (Delay not thy repentance) and then prayed very touchingly. Then he preached from Mark 1. 15. At this place the local preachers had preached for two years, of whom the following lived on the circuit:—John Ebert, Elias Sichley, Adam Hennig, John Riegel, John Peters and Matthew Wonder. Finally the circuit preachers took it up as a regular appointment, and Aaron Yambert and John Hall were the first preachers. In 1839 indications of an awakening appeared, and two daughters of the family where they preached were converted. One of these was the

Our small societies in Illinois had to pass through another severe trial this year, being deprived of the services of a minister for about eight months. But notwithstanding this, they kept up their religious services, although under great discouragements. The second preacher of our Association who visited that State, was Bro. Matt. Hauert. In a report of these circumstances and his visits, published in the Paper, he writes as follows :—

“As Bro. Peter Wiest, who had been appointed for these parts, could not for certain reasons, enter that field, the children of Zion in the far West were for eight months deprived of the services of a minister. In their longing for the preaching of the word of God, they laid their case before the throne of grace. The Germans in these parts are generally very eager to hear the Gospel preached. The prayers of our friends were answered. Agreeably to the order of my presiding elder, I set out for these distant parts, and arrived, with the help of God, on the 3rd of September, safe and sound within 30 miles west of Chicago. My arrival caused great joy among the dear friends. The Lord assisted me powerfully while preaching his word, so that his children were encouraged and edified, and sinners awakened and convinced of the truth, some of whom found pardon in the blood of the Lamb, to the comfort and joy of their hearts. Hallelujah ! I also traveled 117 miles to the Rock river, where I found some of our friends ; tears of joy flowed freely, and we had a precious time. Thence I traveled to the Illinois river, where many Germans live, who alas are, for the most part, like sheep having no shepherd. I preached to them as often as I could ; but on account of sickness some could not attend. Oh, that we as a German organization may soon come to the rescue of these straying sheep in the far West ! We could, undoubtedly, gather many a sheaf for heaven. It is heart-rending to see that so many of our Germans live without God

mother of Samuel P. Spreng, now editor of the Evangelical Messenger. In the year 1840, the never-to-be-forgotten Bro. Samuel Baumgartner and Bro. Benjamin Bixler came. These men were the instruments in the hand of God in the salvation of many, and they organized a class of 22 members. The Lord worked mightily—in the fields and the forests people broke down and cried for mercy. One of them went out with a scythe on his shoulder to his work, and as he walked along it seemed to him as if some one called, saying : “As you go out with your scythe so death goes about—and what will become of you ?” Then he fell down and cried for mercy, in such a manner, that two of his neighbors came running to see what had happened to him. This was Jacob Spreng, father of Otto and E. M. Spreng of the Ohio Conference. All those who were then converted were of the good soil with but one exception. Satan did not steal away the word, nor did it wither away upon stony ground. Most of those twenty-two have gone to glory. One of them, George F. Spreng, the Lord called to be a sower and he has been sowing since 1843. Others have prayed for a SAMUEL, (Samuel P. Spreng) and another family received an Enos (Enos Spreng) on the walls of Zion. And thus some will ‘bear a hundred-fold.’ Oh how often did the brethren John Seybert and Joseph Long visit this place and preach the word with great liberty !”

in the world. Oh, how many of them do yet stand idle in the market, and not a few are already in the 11th hour of their pilgrimage! The harvest is great, but the faithful laborers are few."

Bro. Hauert, on his journey to Rock river, in Henry County, and farther south, organized a small class in said county, as Bro. Boas had not come thus far, and they had, therefore, up to that time, been without a preacher. Meanwhile the Des Plaines society, under the direction of their class-leader, established the first Sunday-school of the Evangelical Association in the far West; it consisted of the superintendent, three male and two female teachers, and fifteen scholars. There being no permanent locality for the school to meet in, and the scholars and teachers living at a distance of three or four miles from each other, the enterprise was attended with great difficulties. Moreover, there was also a great want of suitable Sunday-school books, and they had to shift as well as they could with Bibles, hymn-books, old catechisms, etc. Yet they were not discouraged, and their labors have been crowned with abundant success; the school has continued ever since, exerting a most salutary influence on the young of the whole neighborhood, and has thus been a great blessing to the society.

On motion of the class-leader, it was resolved by the society to erect a church, and this resolution was carried out during the months of April, May and June, 1839. A man, then yet unconverted, named Nicholas Miller, presented to the society an acre of ground for a church and a graveyard. A building of hewn timber, 21 by 23, was erected by the united efforts of the society; yet the class-leader did most of the work himself. This, then, was the first church of the Evangelical Association, west of the State of Ohio, directly one mile and a half east of Wheeling, Cook County, Illinois. Bro. Hauert labored with very great success during his five months' stay among these people. Not only were the young societies more thoroughly established and richly comforted, but powerful conversions also took place.

The new circuit then consisted of four regular preaching places; as, Des Plaines or Wheeling, Naperville, Dutchman's Point, and Sharon in Henry County. Although the appointments were but few, a "round" on the circuit amounted to three hundred miles—the distance from one preaching place to the other, was in one instance 130, and in another 150 miles; and as the preacher was German, and the population for the most part English, he could take up no new preaching places.

The northern half of the State of Illinois was in those days, for the most part, an almost impassable wilderness and very thinly settled. The distance between dwelling houses, even along the main roads, was often from 15 to 30 miles; and even these few inhabitants were but poorly prepared to accommodate strangers, so that traveling in those parts of the country was then extremely difficult. Where now fields in a high state of culture, and respectable farm-houses, greatly delight the eye of the beholder,

the solitary traveler saw in those days nothing but a blooming wilderness, where wolves, cranes, bitterns and partridges, swarmed by hundreds and thousands in perfect security.

Toward the close of the conference year, at the end of February, 1839, Bro. Hauert took his leave to attend the session of the Western Conference, leaving the young circuit in a highly flourishing and promising state, numbering 78 members, fifteen of whom are designated in the record of Conference as new converts, and eighteen as newly received. Notwithstanding their great poverty and the many difficulties they encountered, they had raised \$74.32 for the support of the preacher, though he had labored but five months among them.

### § 195. Beginning of the Work in Michigan.

This year, Bro. Solomon Altimos removed to the State of Michigan, and settled in Monroe County. He preached in different places, both in Michigan and the northern part of Indiana, and in several places met with members of the Evangelical Association, who had emigrated from the State of New York, and formed them into classes. Thus he laid the foundation of the operations of our Church in Michigan and in the northern part of Indiana. In the Counties of Adams, Wells and Allen, along the St. Mary's river, he met with many Germans and preached to them. Also in Fort Wayne, Indiana, he was hospitably received by Bro. Stetzel, and preached there with great success. He also paid a visit to Detroit, and preached there in the German language. This was the beginning of the operations of our Church in the southern part of Michigan and the northern part of Indiana.

From this description of the condition of the Society in those days, it appears that it had arrived at a very important and eventful epoch of its history. The germ of the inward power of the Association, that had thus far but slowly expanded, now began to develop itself more rapidly. As a stream swollen by a heavy and long continued rain, overflows its banks, so the Church now began to go beyond its former limits in every direction.

The provisions for the better support of the ministers, their more rapid increase in point of numbers, their growth in outward and inward culture and qualification generally, the introduction of protracted meetings, Sunday-schools, and the cause of missions, but above all the founding of the Church paper (the *Christliche Botschafter*) and of the Publishing House, exerted a very salutary influence on both the Association and the public at large, contributing largely to the prosperity and growing usefulness of the Church. The Society began to command more respect in general, and even some of its former most inveterate enemies commenced, at least in appearance, to show it more respect, although they had no more sympathy for it than before.

### § 196. Salutory Influence of the "Christliche Botschafter."

This Church paper had been instrumental in placing the Association, its principles, object, and mode of operation in a more favorable light, in arousing and bringing to public notice the talents of its more gifted ministers, in fostering generally a spirit of inquiry and study and uniting the strength of the Church to carry on the work still more effectually. But its influence also overstepped the boundaries of the Church as its circulation increased. It was read and subscribed for by many who were not members. To its usefulness many of the subscribers and agents testified, as a few extracts from among many will show. One of them wrote to the editor as follows :—

"We thank God that the *Christliche Botschafter* has found its way into our part of the country; it has already accomplished great good. It has gained admittance into many a home where it found opportunity to teach and preach, and I trust many more homes will be opened to it."

Another wrote thus :—

"Perhaps no observer has failed to see, that the publication of the *Christliche Botschafter* has made an epoch in the history of the Evangelical Association, a fact that secures it a high rank in the esteem of every true friend of the principles of our Church, although it still admits of many improvements. The expectations that were entertained at its start have been more than realized, and a correspondent of the *Botschafter*, instead of addressing 50 or 100 hearers, has the satisfaction of speaking at once to at least 4000 or 5000 readers. A means through which all the members of the connection can be addressed at once, is of incalculable benefit; for thereby an eminent object, that is indispensably necessary for the continuous prosperity of the connection, is secured, viz.: *An identity of views throughout all the societies.* I am also very much pleased to perceive that the usefulness of the *Botschafter* is to be materially enhanced by the enlargement and more frequent publication. It is presumed that none of its present subscribers will be induced by the slight increase of its subscription price to discontinue it, while on the other hand it is confidently expected that it will receive many new subscribers, and that its agents will not rest satisfied until it is taken by every family within the Association, and by many others."

The number of members was at the close of this conference year 7,859, the increase during the year 550.

There occurred but one death in the ministry during the year, namely that of Bro. Benjamin Ettinger. He resided in Scott Township, Sandusky County, Ohio. Bro. Ettinger found Christ in his youth and soon afterwards united with the Evangelical Association. He served about 5 years as an itinerant, and the remainder of his life in the capacity of a local

preacher. On his death-bed he had uninterrupted peace, and died in the hope of immortality, in his 45th year.

#### § 197. The Seventh General Conference,

which took place in the year 1839, was a very important assembly. Its transactions were perhaps more far-reaching than those of any other General Conference held hitherto, and were highly promotive of the good work. A condensed report is given here.

This was the first General Conference that had been appointed by the one preceding, and took place in the church of the Evangelical Association, about three miles south-west of Millheim, Center County, Pa., commonly called Mosser's Church. Its session began March 25th, 1839.

As the Society had as yet no bishop, Henry Niebel, the president of the last General Conference, opened the session by reading a part of the Word of God, singing, and prayer. Thomas Buck was then elected chairman, and he appointed George Brickley, secretary.

Hitherto the Discipline of the Church contained no provision, either defining or limiting the power of General Conference, so that this body had, in fact, an unlimited power. It could make alterations of, and additions to the doctrines and government of the Church, as it deemed best. But this Conference adopted a constitution, defining the power of future General Conferences. This constitution, however, can be altered under certain conditions, with the exception of the articles of faith, and has been changed somewhat since. This was a very necessary measure, and ought to have been adopted fifteen years before.

This Conference also considerably limited the power of the bishops, with regard to the appointments of the preachers, and their transfer from one place to another, during the interval of the Annual Conferences. Heretofore, a bishop was authorized, with the assistance of two presiding elders, to assign, at the Annual Conferences, both to the presiding elders their districts, and to the preachers their circuits, and in the interval of the Annual Conferences to transfer both presiding elders and preachers, according to his option. Attempts have since been made to restore this power of the bishops, especially with regard to the transfer of preachers from one Conference to another; but not being supported by a constitutional majority (three-fourths) of the General Conference, it proved a failure. As, however, the connection had no bishop from the publication of its Doctrines and Discipline up to this time, this power vested in the bishop, was never exercised by an incumbent. But as this Conference elected a bishop, it was therefore considered expedient to define his power. Bro. John Seybert was elevated to this highest office of the Church, and thus became

the first "regular" Bishop of the Association, according to the rules of the Discipline.\*

As to Mr. Albright, he was elected to this office before the Doctrines and the Discipline had been adopted. His case was in every respect an extraordinary one; for even before his elevation to the superintendency of the Church, which happened but a short time before his death, he exercised, from the very organization of the Association till his death, all episcopal power, transferring preachers and arranging everything in the Association, as it seemed best to him, yet not always without consulting his brethren. He was, therefore, in the full sense of the word, the bishop of the Association from the time of its organization to his death, exerting a power and influence upon it, such as no bishop has done after him and probably none ever will.†

Together with these changes of the Discipline, others were made, and a number of new clauses and rules introduced, especially in the chapter on "*Temporal Economy*." Of these new laws and rules, the following are the most important: "*Of selling and using Spirituous Liquors*;" "*Of Slavery*;" the above mentioned constitution or rules, touching the power of the General Conference, and the section: "*Of the Support of Missions*." With these new regulations new clauses were introduced in different places; for instance, the addition to the duties of the superintending preachers, making it obligatory on them to establish Sunday-schools wherever practicable. The chapter on the "*Temporal Economy*" of the Association was considerably changed, especially the section concerning our Printing Establishment, and that of the support of the preachers. The unequitable rule which diminished the small salary of the married preachers still more, increasing thereby that of the single men, which the General Conference of 1835 had introduced, was repealed and the former rule re-introduced. With the limitation of the power of General Conference, and the change of its routine of business, the *delegate system* was introduced, which made the General Conference consist of one member for every four members of each Annual Conference.

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\* ) In historical order Bishop Seybert was beyond all contradiction the *second* bishop in the Evangelical Association. But everyone who knew him will readily admit without injustice to anyone else, that with regard to *diligence, devotion, humility, unceasing labors* and *success* Seybert was among all the preachers and Church officers of his time, *first and foremost*.

† ) Mr. Albright was in the full sense of the word the *first* bishop of the Evangelical Association. From the historical standpoint, the facts that he was *elected* bishop in 1807 and *remained* bishop until his death and was *acknowledged* as such by his co-laborers, make an end of all criticism on this point. When it is said that Seybert was the first "regular" bishop, that is as much as saying that he was the first bishop restricted in his office by rules and regulations, and that leaves Albright as the bishop *unrestricted* in the exercise of episcopal functions. Both historical justice and proper respect of the Evangelical Association toward him require that he be recognized without any modification as our *first* bishop.

As before stated, each elder was heretofore entitled to a seat and vote at the General Conference. This change was evidently for the better, as General Conference could henceforth be composed of the most experienced and generally most talented members of the ministry, and the annual conferences represented proportionably.

The new Publishing House claimed and received the particular attention of this Conference. Its present arrangement was not only sanctioned, but various measures were taken to increase its efficiency. It was resolved, that the *Christliche Botschafter*, beginning with the following year, be published semi-monthly instead of once a month, and be enlarged somewhat, at the slight addition of 25 cents to the former subscription price. This gave a powerful impulse to the paper, but at the same time more than doubled the amount of labor in the Establishment. From that time the paper made rapid progress and exerted a constantly increasing salutary influence on the connection.

Arrangements were also made to publish a considerable number of Sunday-school and other books, especially the well-known stereotyped German pocket Bible of the Association. This latter work was, indeed, a great enterprise in those days, as it cost almost or fully as much as the Establishment itself; but it being published for subscribers at a high price, the undertaking succeeded, though not without some difficulty. The first edition nearly covered the cost of the plates, and the price was then reduced to less than one-half. The little school-book, called "*Anfangsbuch*" (primer), was in manuscript approved by the Conference, and 6000 copies were ordered to be printed. Two new committees, one called the Book Committee, the other the Committee for examining new works that may be offered for publication, were elected; also a third one, to select and prepare Sunday-school books for publication.

This Conference also took the first measures toward publishing a history of the Evangelical Association.

The Conference resolved, that a history be compiled, according to the plan devised, and be published in the following manner: Three brethren were appointed, one for each Conference; viz.: Charles Hammer for the West Pennsylvania, Thomas Buck for the East Pennsylvania, and John Dreisbach for the Ohio Conference; of whom it was required to gather the necessary materials, which William W. Orwig was then to arrange and collect into a book. But this resolution was not carried out, as only a few sheets of written matter were produced. The appointed brethren found their task much more difficult than the Conference had anticipated; nor did they receive that assistance from the ministers, on which they had calculated. Thus the matter remained till the next General Conference.

William W. Orwig was re-elected editor for four years, and the Establishment received an additional officer, the General Agent, the duties of

which office had hitherto been attended to by the editor. Bro. Charles Hammer was appointed to this office. This was a necessary and highly beneficial improvement.

As the two Annual Conferences had increased considerably for several years, and became pretty strong in numbers of preachers and members, they were divided into three new Annual Conferences with the following names:—

1. East Pennsylvania Conference, consisting of the districts: Philadelphia, Canaan and Moriah. 2. West Pennsylvania Conference, consisting of the districts: Zion, Salem and Carmel. 3. Ohio Conference, consisting of the districts: Tabor, Sandusky and Ohio. The territory of East Pennsylvania Conference embraced the part of Pennsylvania east of the two branches of the Susquehannah, a great portion of the north-western part of the State of New York as far as the City of Buffalo, and subsequently extended over a great part of (then) Upper Canada; that of West Pennsylvania Conference embraced Pennsylvania west of the two branches of the Susquehannah, and extended into Maryland and Virginia; that of Ohio Conference embraced the greater part of Ohio, and some parts of Indiana and Illinois. This, then, was the field of labor of the Evangelical Association in those days, numbering three Annual Conferences, 85 itinerants, 36 circuits, 2 stations, and 4 missions which were divided into nine presiding elder districts.\*

As to the cause of missions, it received the full attention and warm support of this General Conference, for not only was the lately founded Missionary Society sanctioned, but a section on the *Support of Missions* was introduced into the Discipline of the Church.

As the cost of living is generally more expensive in cities than elsewhere, this General Conference authorized the Annual Conferences to increase the salary of all their preachers and missionaries in these places, beyond what the Discipline allows, to any amount they may deem necessary.

On the whole, this Conference was characterized by great zeal for the cause of God. It was animated, not by that timid, faithless, and fainting spirit, which never dares do or undertake much for God's kingdom, but by a bold enterprising spirit, that took hold not only of the majority of the

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\*) From these facts it is very evident that these three Conferences are of equal age and are therefore the three oldest annual Conferences. The East and West (now "Central") Pennsylvania, and Ohio Conferences are still in existence, (1894) and have in their several conference records the same year-number, beginning with 1840. We have no one oldest, nor any mother conference since the old Eastern became defunct in 1839. That the West Pa., and Ohio Conferences should have been in anyway subordinated to the East Pennsylvania Conference is the fiction of an ignoramus. The fathers in the Church who were members of the General Conference in 1839, also tell us plainly in their diaries and otherwise, that these three new Conferences were made independent of each other. Both the records and practice agree in this matter.

ministry, but also of some of the societies and members. It was particularly the missionary spirit which filled the whole Association in those days ; and this spirit called forth and fostered, as it always does, a deep interest in all enterprises having the glory of God for their object.

### § 198. A Very Important Transaction.

One of the most important and salutary transactions of this Conference was the election of John Seybert to the office of Bishop. Bro. Seybert remained, like the apostle Paul, unmarried, on account of the work of the Lord. He was a traveling preacher, pioneer, and missionary in the fullest sense of the word. He lived and moved in the service of the Master, and had the unlimited confidence of the General Conference which elected him unanimously (his own vote excepted) to this *highest* office in the Evangelical Association, and he possessed to a like degree the respect and confidence of the membership of the Church—to which his life and conduct entitled him fully. So far as is known to us he retained this unlimited confidence to the end of his earthly life. He was re-elected every four years until his happy departure to the better world in 1860.

Concerning his first election we find the following notice in the diary of Rev. Absalom B. Schaefer, who was a member of that General Conference :—

“The election of Bro. John Seybert to the office of Bishop, was to me very remarkable and solemn. It seemed he had not expected it, but when it was announced that *John Seybert had been elected as Bishop of the Evangelical Association* he arose and walked back into one of the last pews, bowed down and wept for a time. Afterward he arose, came forward and said : ‘I have promised God to be obedient, and since the brethren have elected me to be overseer I will acquiesce, but I realize that I lack that fitness for this weighty office which my older brethren possess—you must, therefore, pray for me and have patience with me.’ This and other utterances of his came evidently from the heart, and made such an impression that the whole Conference was melted to tears. At this episcopal election I saw how necessary it is that *the office seek the man and not the man the office.*”

On the evening of that day Bishop Seybert wrote in his diary as follows : “March 26, 1839. On Wednesday the cause of missions was taken into consideration, and a Bishop was elected at about five o'clock P. M., which important office unexpectedly fell to my lot, which burdened me so much on account of the importance of the office, that it pressed tears from my eyes. For a time I lost my appetite for eating, and sleep fled from me, but gradually I felt relieved and more composed. I felt inwardly disposed to humble myself under God and my brethren and to serve faithfully in the

administration of this office, and labor for the glory of God and the welfare of my fellow-travelers to eternity.”\*

Soon after his election he published the following call to the ministry, which shows very clearly “of what spirit” he was. This call ought to find its proper echo in the Evangelical Association from generation to generation :—

“Dearly beloved ! Inasmuch as the cause of the Lord rests heavily on my heart, and as I feel inwardly stirred and constrained, to devote myself to His work by day and night without ceasing, with soul and body, therefore I desire, through the *Christliche Botschafter*, to encourage our Evangelical friends, and in general all who love God, in this important cause, which also has been done by other brethren, and not without good effect upon sincere souls.

“But, as hitherto appeals have been made principally to the lay-members, I would at this time speak a word to their leaders, and communicate my thoughts and convictions to them in a simple and upright manner, especially since at the present time there seems to be a greater lack of active ministers in our Association, than ever before.

“The question first arises : Where lies the fault ? Certainly not on the side of God, who would that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. The fault, then, must be with us. Evidently there is a lack of love to God and to our fellow men in the hearts of many, as also a lack of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Great Head of the Church, our adorable Lord, who gave His life for us when we were yet enemies.

“There is an especial want among us of the following qualities, which the Master possessed :—

“First : We lack the spirit of humility, which He displayed in the voluntary acceptance of the poverty and obscurity that marked the circumstances of His birth and early career.

“Second : That voluntary submission to the shame of the cross ; we are not willing to bear the derision of every fool and devil’s imp.

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\*) “During the first months after the election to this new office he wept and prayed much in secret and often shed tears in public because it burdened him so much. He could scarcely endure the thought that he should exercise the oversight over the whole work of 80 itinerant ministers, and frequently said : ‘Why did they not elect a man who would be more competent for the office ?’ Although he was willing to apply all his talents and strength to the discharge of his official duties, he contended they were not sufficient for the functions of a Bishop. During the first weeks, appetite and sleep left him, and often he wept for a long time on his bed. It seemed he had to be converted to the episcopacy after his election to this office. But after he had presided over the first Annual Conference and everything passed off acceptably, and his ministerial brethren from all directions encouraged him, he determined fully to go forward in the name of the Lord, and serve God and the Church in this office to the best of his ability.”—*Life of Seybert* (German), pp. 202-205.

"Third: That willingness to suffer afflictions and tribulations without number, even unto death. Behold the love of Him, who was constrained by His very agonies to pray for His merciless tormentors.

"If there were more of the Spirit and qualities of Jesus among us in general, there would be less of the cares of the world to absorb our time, engage our attention and exhaust our energies; we would deny ourselves of all earthly things, and, without fear of want, without making provision for the flesh, in confidence in him who upholds the sparrow and hears the young ravens when they cry, and clothes the lilies of the field with inimitable glory, we would surmount all difficulties, in order to execute the command of Christ, to bring to the world the glad message of her crucified Redeemer. There would not be so many unanswered Macedonian calls from Canada and other localities, where they are in need of true shepherds and true preachers of the Gospel. The thousands of poor Germans in the States of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, etc., who wander amid perils in the moral desert in great throngs, like sheep without a shepherd, would in that case soon be fed with the bread of life.

"If the Spirit of Christ were dominant in us, there would not be so many who, in their best years, excuse themselves from active work and locate for the purpose of pursuing worldly objects. And many others would forthwith extricate themselves from their temporal complications to enter the Gospel ministry. Oh, it is to be feared, that many bury the talent which has been entrusted to them, and will eventually be adjudged slothful and wicked servants.

"As for myself, I am deeply grieved, because I hesitated until my thirtieth year, before I ventured out into the Gospel field, and because I did not begin earlier to blow the Gospel trumpet. However, with me it was not worldly greed, nor domestic affairs, that kept me back, but natural diffidence, and a keen sense of my inability caused me to doubt my call and shrink from the magnitude of the undertaking. But I cautiously avoided temporal entanglements, which might at any time prevent me from going, and waited for a more positive Divine call and better fitness for the office, just as a sea-captain, with sails spread, watches for a favorable wind. Finally, however, my unrest became intolerable; I could no longer contain myself at home, and therefore, with Christ ventured out upon the stormy and tempestuous voyage which my career has proved to be.

"But now, many have located before they reach their thirtieth year. Just when by reason of practice and experience they are properly fitted for this important office, and when, by reason of physical strength and intellectual maturity, they could be eminently useful to the Church in defending and proclaiming her doctrines with ability and manly courage, they take the hand from the plough and look back. Is not this a marvellous thing? Were these men really sent of the Lord, and have they turned back and become unfaithful? Or did they run without being commis-

sioned from above? Let each one examine himself—and the innocent shall be free!

“What then? Who will go into the battle-field where the fight is fiercest, and maintain his position under the banner of Jesus unto death? Who is willing and ready to *die in the field*? Reader, what think you? Do you know of one such? I know of *one*! Up, ye laggards! The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He may send laborers into His vineyard.”

This “one” was, of course, himself, and his whole career confirmed his brave words.

### § 199. Another Very Momentous Transaction.

Until this time General Conference had, as already remarked, full power and liberty, to make new laws for the Church, to change any part of our Discipline, even the articles of faith, according to its own judgment. Its power was practically unlimited. But it now adopted a *constitution* which restricted its power considerably, and thus introduced a self-limitation upon this highest body of the Church. From this time forward this Conference could alone change only laws and regulations in the “Temporal Economy” of the discipline as it might see fit, but in regard to the other “Rules” and the introduction of new laws it is bound to the consent of two-thirds of all the members of the Annual Conferences as we now have it in the Discipline under the head of “General Conference”, etc. And with regard to the Articles of Faith any change whatever is prohibited. Hence the assertion that the General Conference as the highest legislative and judicial body in the Church could do what it pleases, is incorrect and even revolutionary. General Conference is restricted with reference to the disciplinary rights of the Annual Conferences, and in regard to the management of the cause of missions she can do nothing that is in conflict with the constitution of the Missionary Society, which she has herself sanctioned and made binding.

The Articles of Faith contain all the unchangeable foundational doctrines of Holy Scripture, consequently it is perfectly and logically just that they should be constitutionally unchangeable among us. If an edifice is to stand, then, above all things, its foundation must be immovable. If it were allowed to move its basal stones to and fro, how soon it would tumble down!—If in a Church the cardinal doctrines are left subject to change then how soon will various “winds of doctrine” arise to toss the people to and fro and cause confusion. Against such possibilities of evil, safe provisions have thus been made.

This General Conference closed its session, as follows: “The session of this Conference was closed in peace and love, and every member of it signed his name to the proceedings as a token of approval of all the above resolutions, items and transactions. Thomas Buck, George Brickley, Francis

Hoffman, Charles Hammer, Michael F. Maize, Daniel Berger, Jacob Barber, Daniel Kehr, John M. Sindlinger, Charles Hesser, Peter Getz, Jacob Boas, Henry Bucks, Henry Niebel, Aaron Yambert, John J. Kopp, Solomon G. Miller, John G. Zinser, Peter Wiest, Samuel V. Gunten, Philip Wagner, Absalom B. Schaefer, Elias Stoever, John Sensel, Joseph Harlacher, John Young, John Lutz, John Seybert, John P. Leib, Joseph Long and William W. Orwig.

### § 200. Annual Conference Sessions.

For the last time the Western and Eastern Conferences held their annual sessions because they had as a matter of course appointed them at their sessions a year previous. They had to wind up their affairs and afterward the *three new* Conferences would step in and go into full operation.

The Western Conference assembled in the Evangelical Church at Green Township, Stark County, Ohio, March 4th, 1839, and the Eastern Conference in the town of Lebanon, Pa., April 11th. At the former Henry Niebel was chairman, and at the latter Bishop Seybert presided. Heretofore the Annual Conferences had elected their presiding officers from among the presiding elders, but now the Bishop presided over both the Annual and General Conferences. Seven preachers located and twelve new ones were received into the itinerancy. The Western Conference created a new presiding elder district, which was called Sandusky district, and six new circuits, partly by dividing the larger ones, partly by extending its sphere of operations. The Eastern Conference formed a new station called Pottsville and Minersville station, and established four missions, two in (then) Upper Canada, one in the State and one in the City of New York, viz.: New York Mission, Jacob Borkert, missionary; Mohawk Mission, Christian Hummel, missionary; in Upper Canada, Waterloo Mission, Christian Holl, missionary; Black Creek Mission, Michael Eis, missionary. These then were the first regular missions of the Evangelical Association.\*

Since the year 1860 an opinion has obtained considerable prevalence in some quarters that the East Pennsylvania Conference was the *oldest* Annual Conference and was therefore entitled to the prerogative by priority in a certain contingency mentioned in the Discipline connected with the provision for fixing time and place for the meeting of General Conference. No valid historical proof is offered in support of this sentiment. The following paragraph written by Rev. William W. Orwig ought to be conclusive on this point: "The General Conference having created *three new* Conferences out of the two old ones, the names of the latter were

\*) It has been erroneously asserted that the East Pennsylvania Conference established these missions. The East Pennsylvania Conference had its first session *one year later*, in 1840.

as a matter of course, dropped, and the 'Eastern Conference' and 'Western Conference' disappeared henceforth from the annals of the Church. Therefore, when the Eastern Conference met for the last time, (as above mentioned) it was left optional with the preachers to choose one of the two Conferences or to receive an appointment within the limits of either. Some chose their Conference, others gave themselves up unconditionally." Thus, then, there were now *three new* Conferences including the whole work, beginning their records and history all three equally with their first sessions in 1840.\*

### § 201. Formation of Conference Missionary Societies.

As the Eastern Conference at its last session in 1839, was in accordance with the provision of General Conference dissolved and the East Pa. and West Pa. Conference now came into existence instead, so the same took place also with the Conference Missionary Society. This latter was formed, as we have already seen, in the year 1838, by the Eastern Conference, under the name: "*The German Evangelical Missionary Society of North America*," and gathered about \$500 missionary money during the conference year. Also a number of auxiliaries were formed and attached to it. During the last session of the Eastern Conference this missionary society also assembled to hold its *first* and at the same time its *last* annual session, at which it was dissolved and *two new* Conference Missionary Societies were formed with new names and new constitutions.

A few months before this, a constitution had been compiled for the Missionary Society of the Ev. Association which was to be formed. This document was adopted and said Society formed, with Bishop Seybert as its president, by the General Conference shortly before the last session of the Eastern Conference—and now both the new Conference Missionary Auxiliaries annexed themselves to it. The entire process in chronological order was as follows:

1. At the session of the Eastern Conference from March 28th to April 4th, 1838, "*The German Evangelical Missionary Society*," etc., was established which collected about \$500 during the conference year. This was the *first* Missionary Society in the Evangelical Association, and had Rev. William W. Orwig for its president.

2. On Christmas, 1838,—about nine months later—a meeting of preachers and laymen was held in New Berlin, Pa., which recognized the

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\*) Rev. Absalom B. Schaefer, who was a member of the General Conference in 1839, says in his diary, page 51: "The whole Church was divided into three Conference districts, made independent of each other, except in the missionary cause." Here, then, are the same three Conferences, then created and made equal and independent, save only in regard to the cause of missions. General Conference having established the chief missionary society, the Annual Conferences were to form themselves into auxiliary societies and co-operate in this respect.

necessity of organizing a Chief Missionary Society for the Church, and John Seybert, George Brickley, and William W. Orwig were appointed as a committee to draft a constitution. On March 1st, 1839, another meeting was held at the house of John S. Dunkel, in Buffalo township, Union Co., Pa., at which this constitution was adopted, and a preliminary organization of the Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association effected. John Seybert was elected its president, together with the other officers of the Society.

3. A few weeks afterward General Conference assembled viz.: on the 25th of March, 1839, and ratified this constitution, thereby completing the formation of the Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association.

4. Again a few weeks later, viz.: April 14th, 1839, the Eastern Conference held its last session and completed practically the division of this Conference as ordered by General Conference into the East Pa., and West Pa. Conferences, which was at the same time also the cessation of the Eastern Conference. During this session of said Conference the German Evangelical Missionary Society also held its first and last annual meeting, and thereby also closed its existence and transferred its funds in equal halves to the two new Conference Missionary Societies.

An abstract of the proceedings of this annual missionary meeting was published in the *Christliche Botschafter* for May, 1839, in which we find the following items: "At the annual meeting of the German Evangelical Missionary Society of N. A., held at Lebanon, Pa., on the 15th of April, 1839, it was

*Resolved*, That this Society divide itself into the East Pa., and West Pa. Conference Missionary Societies and that the funds in the treasury also be divided equally."

Thereupon two new constitutions for the two new Societies were presented and adopted, and by an election of officers for the new Societies their organizations were completed. John P. Leib was elected president of the East Pa. Conference Missionary Society, and Philip Wagner of the West Pa. Conference Society. Thus the East Pa. Conference Missionary Society came into existence on the 15th of April, 1839, and at the same place and time, and by the same authority the West Pa. Conference Missionary Society began its existence.

In the month of November, 1839, the editor of the *Christliche Botschafter* wrote as follows: "This Society (German Ev. Miss. Society) was last Spring, at the annual meeting *dissolved*, and *two new Societies organized*; one is now called the East Pa., and the other West Pa. Conference Missionary Society as branches to the Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association of N. A." In the *Botschafter* of May, 1840, Rev. Charles Hammer, being secretary of the West Pa. Conference Missionary Society, wrote thus: "Our Society now has existed one year, although several auxiliaries were formed before and attached to the German Ev. Miss. Society. But as that Society was *dissolved* on the 15th of April, 1839, and *out of it*

two new Societies were organized, the auxiliaries within the West Pa. Conference attached themselves to our Conference Society."

Thus we see that, first, The German Evangelical Missionary Society was organized; second, The Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association was organized; third, The first named Society was discontinued, and out of it the East Pa., and West Pa. Conference Missionary Societies were formed, and thus these latter two are of equal age and both younger than the Missionary Society of the Ev. Association.

There has been an opinion advocated which was also put into print by Rev. Solomon Neitz,\* that the East Pa. Conference Missionary Society was the *first and oldest* Missionary Society in the Evangelical Association. That this opinion is altogether unfounded is evident from the above historical facts chronologically stated as they occurred. These facts are all derived from official sources and documents.† Here it seems proper to repeat what Father John Dreisbach wrote to the author many years ago: "It is very desirable that great care be had in compiling fragments of our history that no errors but only the truth be published." Every intelligent reader will see that Father Dreisbach advocated a principle which must govern all reliable compilations of history.

The Ohio Conference Missionary Society was organized a year later, in 1840, and the younger Conferences followed in this line, so that in each of our Annual Conferences there is a Conference Missionary Society in operation.

## § 202. Further Prosperity of the Work.

The Association enjoyed great prosperity in this, as she had also in the preceding year. The work extended considerably, and glorious awakenings occurred in different places. Most of the new circuits in the West and the four missions in the North gained firm footing, and the old fields of labor were extended and strengthened.

As the founding of the Evangelical Association and its labors had, in former days, been considered superfluous and pernicious, by some of the older ecclesiastical organizations; so its present attempt to establish home missions was also found fault with, especially in those parts where said denominations had regular churches and preachers. They saw in this attempt an insult offered to their churchly character, and a declaration on our part, that they were heathen. It is true, there were in most of the existing Churches praiseworthy exceptions, but there were still whole dis-

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\*) See *Life of Seybert*, p. 217.

†) As the East Pa. Conference Missionary Society has, up to the present time, counted the year of the existence of the "German Evangelical Missionary Society," as the first year of its existence and hence numbers one year more than the Central Pa. Conference Missionary Society, its enumeration is without doubt *one year too high* and its record ought to be corrected in this respect.

tricts and parts of country, where the conduct of many members of said denominations was not a whit better than that of heathen ; and as this was the case then, so it has been ever since, in almost all parts of the country. Other denominations, again, were in appearance not so rude and godless as those just spoken of, and many of their members were well disposed, and conducted themselves becomingly ; but the great majority of the members of even these Churches had only the appearance of godliness, while they denied its power. This was the condition of the greater part of the German Churches of this country even in those times, and many of the English were not much better. In order to prove this, we here insert a few truthful reports on the state of morals in some parts of the United States. Bro. Daniel Berger, in a report of Lehigh circuit, in Lehigh County, Pa., in the year 1839, writes among other things as follows :—

“The attendance, on the whole, was good (he refers to a camp-meeting); but some of those present manifested their so-called faith by pelting the congregation with rotten eggs and stones. We cannot as yet say much of awakenings and conversions ; but there is no lack of opposition and persecution from the devil and his servants ; and the great ignorance and unparalleled impiety of the people have astonished me this year more than ever before. I have, before this, been in places where the people were wicked ; but nowhere found such shameful wickedness as in this part of the country. Here the words of our Saviour are fully applicable : ‘Behold ! I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves.’”

Bro. John G. Zinser, in a report of some camp-meetings in 1839, in the State of Ohio, writes of certain parts of Pickaway County, Ohio, as follows :—

“The light of truth has not yet everywhere dissipated the uncommon spiritual darkness which envelops many of the German inhabitants of these parts of the country. It is true, the Gospel of Christ has in various places achieved many a glorious conquest, and not a few have been brought to a saving knowledge of the truth ; yet it will require many more mighty struggles, before a great reformation can be brought about among these so very degenerate professors of religion.”

### § 203. Commencement of Mohawk Mission.

We have already seen that the Eastern Conference at her last session, founded the Mohawk Mission in the State of New York, and appointed Christian Hummel as missionary. Out of this mission came a great part of the New York Conference and it seems therefore quite proper to insert here a detailed report concerning it.

The so-called Mohawk Germans, among whom this mission was established, are the descendants of German Palatines and Swabians who in the year 1709, etc., were transported by the British Government into the province of New York and employed in the forests along the Hudson river

north of New York. Through the unfriendly treatment received at the hands of the provincial government of New York many of them were induced to move northward until they arrived in the beautiful Mohawk valley, stretching from Albany to Syracuse, where they were cordially received by the Mohawk tribe and other Indians. There they settled, and during 160 years retained their Rhenish dialect among themselves almost unmixed, excepting some Indian words and forms of expression which crept into it in course of time. Some Dutchmen afterward came among them who also introduced some of their modes of expression. Some of the family names in the Valley are mementos of them, such as Van Renssalaer, Van Buren, Van Courtlandt, Schuyler, etc. And when in later times, many English settlers came among them and the towns of Utica, Rome, Syracuse, etc., were founded, many Anglicisms were introduced into the vernacular. And yet the descendants of these Germans retained their language in use, although they could also speak the English language.

Sometime previous to the founding of this mission the English Methodists found open doors among these people and had many conversions, but did not properly take care of the work. The Evangelical preachers who labored further west in this State also paid some visits to these people and found a hearty welcome, but were not able to take the work in hand properly until the Eastern Conference finally established a mission and appointed a missionary.

An extract from a letter by the *first* missionary, Bro. Hummel, will furnish us very interesting information with regard to the beginning and progress of the work on this mission. He says :

“ In the second year of my itinerancy, Conference sent me (1838) to Lake circuit, N. Y., and placed me under the charge of Jacob Riegel. Bro. Charles Hammer was our presiding elder. During the year we held a camp-meeting between the lakes, at which two brethren from Montgomery County, in the Mohawk Valley, came a distance of 140 miles, whose names were John Dunkel and John Rothschild. At this meeting John Dunkel expressed a strong desire that Bro. Hammer should send a preacher of the Gospel to his German people. But Bro. Hammer was obliged to answer that he had none to spare, yea that he had not even enough to supply our own fields. Then Dunkel asked for advice—what could be done ? He further said that we should not be concerned about the pay of the preacher ; he would obligate himself to pay the salary of a single preacher and his traveling expenses to the Conference. Still Bro. Hammer said he could not do anything and that he would have to wait till the session of the Conference. Then Mr. Dunkel requested Mr. Rothschild to write a letter and in that letter Mr. Dunkel requested Conference to send them a preacher, stating that he would obligate himself for his salary and traveling expenses—and handed the letter to Bro. Hammer. About New Year I also received a letter from Mr. Dunkel addressed to Conference to the same

effect. When these letters were read to Conference that body resolved to establish a mission in Mr. Dunkel's neighborhood.

"This Conference—held at Lebanon, Pa.,—then appointed me to this new mission, and upon the 1st day of June I arrived there. I commenced in Syracuse and found entertainment with a man named Schweitzer. But this town was too far away from my proper field of labor. As I traveled farther, I was necessitated to ask for a night's lodging in the village of Vernon. Here my host inquired of me who I was and whither I was traveling? While I sat at the supper-table he went, without my knowledge, and brought in Rev. L. Weaver, a Methodist minister, who greeted me in a very friendly manner. He entertained me all night, and next morning we took breakfast with one of his members. Here I was recommended to a German Lutheran minister who lived not far out of my way and had also been a pastor in Mr. Dunkel's neighborhood. I looked up this pastor and found him to be a countryman—an open-hearted Swabian by the name of Wetzel, who gave me valuable information where I could find German people. He asked me to preach for him in Utica on the following Sunday, which I willingly promised, he then sent me to one of his deacons for lodging, all of which was quite a help to me in my further labors. The Lord also blessed my labors in Rome and likewise four miles away from there in Fullerton, (Conrad Settlement). In Utica it seemed at first as though all would go well until an over-ambitious pharisee stirred up strife, because I had not made my home with him. Now I went to Bro. Dunkel where I preached on Sunday, the 1st of June, in Frey's school-house. As I left Dunkel's he offered me money, which I refused for the present; at my next appointment he repeated his offer, but I refused again, saying I would ask for it as soon as I needed it.

"The Lord was graciously and powerfully with us during the conference year in opening many doors. Many sinners were converted, and financial contributions were quite liberal. From Rome northward to Constableville, Steuben, and Boonville, and southward to Verona, and eastward to Conajoharie, and right and left along the mountains and along the Mohawk river we found openings and several classes were organized. At the close of the year I started away from Dunkel's to go to the Annual Conference, which was to be held in Schuylkill Haven, Pa. Now I asked Bro. Dunkel for money, but he wanted to know first how much I had received, whereupon I told him between \$90 and \$100, which he could scarcely believe. He then inquired concerning the temporal circumstances of the preachers, which I explained as well as I could, whereupon he gave me \$100—to be distributed equally among the preachers. Then he requested that Conference should send two preachers, and for the second one he would renew his former obligation. Conference readily acceded to this request and changed the mission into a circuit. I was returned and Bro. George Ramige given me as a colleague.

"I left the appointments to Bro. Ramige and traveled northward to look up new appointments, in which I succeeded by the help of God. The circuit was soon extended across Black river and into Jefferson County, to Lafargeville, etc. The distance from Rome to the northern end was about 100 miles, with many extensions to the right and left. Many doors were opened and the Lord blessed our labors with many awakenings and conversions. At the close of the year Bro. Dunkel gave his \$100—he had given \$10 before—which he did also for several years afterward. The Lord be praised for his gracious help!"

At the expiration of this year he reported eighty-four conversions, and altogether 166 members.

#### § 204. New York City Mission.

The mission in the city of New York was established from the conviction that a strictly evangelical mission among the Germans of that city was highly necessary, for which reason conference did not deem it necessary to wait till an invitation was sent from that quarter, as had been the case with the three other missionary fields. The following is the first report from that missionary field:—

"Since it is the duty of the missionaries to send quarterly reports of their missionary fields, and as it is believed that these reports will be read with some interest by all the readers of the *Botschafter*, especially by all the members of the Evangelical Association, who by their contributions to the cause of missions have exhibited so deep an interest in the welfare of these sheep going astray without a shepherd in the wilderness, I will send the first report of our mission.

"I arrived here on the 3rd of May, and the following day I looked about for a convenient preaching place and succeeded. On the 12th, I preached the first sermon to seven hearers. Some thought it was not worth while to preach to so small a number; but I told them it was well worth while, etc. My text was Rom. 1, 16.; the hearers were quite attentive, and some have come regularly ever since. The number has since increased, and I have reason to believe that some of the seed of the divine word has fallen on good ground. May the Lord grant his blessing, that it may spring up and bear fruit for everlasting life!

"I feel confident, that our labors in this place will not be in vain; yet the work is connected with many and great difficulties, and many a strenuous effort will be required, before much can be accomplished. For here we have to contend, not only with great immorality and wickedness, but also with a settled unbelief, both rationalism and atheism. This mission is also more expensive than the friends have probably been aware of. For the preaching place I have to pay \$25 per quarter, where I deliver three sermons on Sunday. But I have some hopes of finding ere long a cheaper place,

where I may also preach during the week. Living, too, is very expensive here, but I shall be as economical as possible.

"Since I have offered my services to the Church as a missionary, I have often been solemnly impressed, especially when meditating on the importance of my position and the trials I must pass through. It is true, every laborer in the Lord's vineyard has his share of difficulties and sufferings; yet there is a great difference between being almost alone, and living in a place where the children of God encourage and comfort one another. But I hope to God, that out of the great number of Germans in this great city, many will be awakened, enlightened, and converted to God. For this I labor, hoping the Lord will bless my efforts, in answer to the prayers of his children. I would ask a special interest in their prayers, when they meet to pray for the cause of missions."

JACOB BORKERT.

New York, June 14, 1839.

This mission had to contend with great difficulties, and at first made slow progress. During the first year there was no effort made to organize a society. In the second year a class consisting of 12 members was formed, which increased considerably in the third year. During the first three years it seemed sometimes as if the mission would fail and have to be abandoned; but toward the close of the third year, it gained a firmer footing, and the prospects became brighter.\*

### § 205. Organization of Missionary Auxiliaries.

The glorious success of the first missions of the Association had a most salutary effect upon the whole membership; the auxiliaries increased, and by and by a large number of missions were established, and these efforts were crowned with blessed results. Although a financial crisis prevailed during the years 1837-1841 the missionary spirit overcame this difficulty. As an instance showing how auxiliaries were formed and funds raised for missionary work, we here briefly describe the organization of an auxiliary on Milford circuit, in the East Pa. Conference.

On Sunday the 14th of September, 1839, a missionary meeting was held in the large barn of Jeremiah Yeakel—there being no Church edifice in that neighborhood. The meeting was attended by the members of the neighboring classes in large numbers. The preacher in charge, William Heim, preached an appropriate sermon, and then an organization of an auxiliary was effected in the simplest manner.

When the subscriptions of missionary money were made, all wanted to do their part. Jeremiah Yeakel subscribed \$30, another \$20, several \$10 and \$5.00, and then followed the mites of the poorer from a dollar down to five cents. Even the children wanted to participate. A certain father

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\*) With regard to the splendid success of the missions in Canada, see the section, *The Evangelical Association in Canada.*

signed \$5.00 for himself and family and told the children if they subscribed also they would have to pay it themselves. But how?—this was the great problem for these youths. As already stated, financial distress prevailed. The markets were far away, and in that remote section of country there was scant opportunity for boys and girls to earn any money. What now? Why, one boy who had subscribed 25 cents succeeded in gathering chestnuts and selling them until he could pay the amount and had something left. A little girl told her mother she would abstain from eating butter for some time until she would have “earned” her missionary money in this manner. Others saved their missionary money by getting less clothing. The spirit of invention was awakened, and the truth of the saying was realized. “Where there is a will there is also a way.” The amount subscribed was \$160—and that was also paid in full. The amounts “secured” by subscriptions in those days were really secured. If such missionary zeal were continually prevalent among us, we should know nothing of missionary debts, and have much less of luxurious and foolishly fashionable living!

The missionary auxiliaries were intended not only to collect funds for the support of the mission-work, but also to pray for God's blessing upon the labors of the missionaries, remembering the urgent request made by St. Paul: “Brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified.” For this reason a clause was introduced into the constitutions of the auxiliaries, that a monthly missionary prayer-meeting shall be held, which was also faithfully observed. Usually the president of the auxiliary led this meeting. Thousands of fervent prayers were sent up to the throne of grace for divine blessings upon the labors of the missionaries, and the answers came in accordance with the divine promises, for such intercessions are “good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and come to a knowledge of the truth.” And if the work of missions is to accomplish its noble end, then giving and praying must go together. The missionary angel must have these two wings, in order to bring the everlasting Gospel to all nations!

#### § 206. Further Extension of the Work.

There are no records extant of special revivals at this time; yet the work made progress at Philadelphia, Reading and Pottsville, especially at the latter place. In the Counties of Bucks and Montgomery more hearts and doors were opened for the pure doctrines of the Gospel, and the society in Upper Milford was in a very flourishing condition. At Orwigsburg a new church was built during this year; it was dedicated in January, 1840, and a glorious revival followed; about 20 persons were translated into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Bro. Daniel N. Long traveled on the Indiana circuit—now in the

Pittsburg Conference—and was successful in forming five new classes. A highly blessed camp-meeting was held in Brush Valley, Indiana County, Pa., on the farm of John Oberdorf, which resulted in the conversion of about fifty persons, among whom was Bro. Joseph Truby, who afterwards became a successful itinerant preacher until his decease, April 25th, 1856. Bro. Long held a protracted meeting at the house of Jacob Miller, at which a powerful awakening occurred. A woman was present who was deeply convicted by the preached word and attempted to run away from the meeting, but the power of God overwhelmed her so that she speedily yielded to the Lord and was soundly converted. During the meeting, Bro. Long publicly requested a man named Daniel Oberdorf to give himself immediately to God, which he then did. Another man named Sauer stepped forward, took off his coat, fell upon his knees and cried unto God until he was saved. The man who had opened his house for the meeting was also converted, as was also his wife.

The preachers of the Ev. Association had already commenced to preach in this valley in the year 1822, in the homes of Nicholas Enders and George Baumeister who had removed thither from Virginia. Jacob Baumgartner and Joseph Long were the first preachers of the Association in that part of the country and formed a class of seven members in that year. Subsequently a number of families removed thither from York County, Pa., named Oberdorf, Miller and Frey, and in 1832 the first camp-meeting was held there, attended with others, by John Seybert, Charles Hesser and Jacob Boas. Many persons were converted in that valley, but by immigration and other causes many were again lost.

Miami circuit of the Western Conference, embracing part of the State of Indiana, extended considerably during this year, as far as the center of that State, and had a considerable addition of members and classes. Bro. Absalom B. Schaefer writes in his report of the beginning and progress of our work in the State of Indiana this year, as follows :—

“The work of conversion made but slow progress on this field of labor, till several families from Pennsylvania settled here, who, by their deep interest and exemplary lives, confirmed the truth of the word preached, and thus gave the cause a new impulse.”

The societies of the Evangelical Association in the State of New York and Ohio had been founded mainly by emigrants from the State of Pennsylvania ; this was also the case in the States of Indiana, Illinois, and the western States and territories generally, where our societies were for the most part, and in some places exclusively, founded and sustained by Pennsylvanians ; while those societies in which the European element predominates, were formed out of converts, generally made during revivals. The West is, therefore, under great obligations to the East ; and the East ought, for the same reasons, to continue to take the deepest interest in the prosperity of the West.

This year the infant societies in the State of Illinois had to pass through another sore trial ; for their preacher, Lewis Einsel, soon after his arrival among them, was attacked with a fever, which disabled him for the greater part of the year, so that he could preach but little. He had made a good beginning among them, and had raised the brightest expectations. One of his first official acts in Illinois was the dedication of the lately completed small church, which was the first of our connection in the far West, on June 20th, 1839. Soon after he visited Sharon, in Henry County, Rock Island, and the vicinity of Cedarville in Stephenson County, and preached there. He had also preached a few sermons in Chicago, and took it up as one of his regular preaching places. But on his return from Stephenson County to Wheeling, his health succumbed to the influence of the new climate, and becoming very sick, it was with the greatest difficulty that he reached the latter place, where he was confined to a bed of sickness for the greater part of the year, treated all the while with the kindest attention by the friends, but especially by Bro. Esher's family.

Several families from Penn's Valley, Center County, Pa., all members of our Church, settled in the neighborhood of Cedarville in the Spring of 1839 ; before they set out from Pennsylvania they had been organized into a regular class by Bro. Seybert, and had elected a class-leader according to the Discipline of the Church, so that they arrived as a regular class in Illinois. According to the advice of Bro. Seybert, soon after their arrival in their new home, they introduced the order and discipline of our Church, sustaining them also till they received the regular services of our ministers. The following are the names of some of the heads of said families : Epley, Falget, Sill, Warrig, etc. Thus not only individual members, but whole classes of our Church emigrated to the far West, as Illinois was then called. In this manner the East subsequently lost many members every year, while the membership in the West increased the more rapidly.

In the beginning of December of this year, Bro. John Lutz was appointed to assist Bro. Einsel, or rather to take his place, as he was still sick. He arrived at Wheeling, and soon after set out for Naperville, accompanied by Bro. John J. Esher, who was then layman yet. The distance between the two places being thirty miles, and the way over trackless prairies, a guide was absolutely necessary for strangers, in order to find the place. A deep snow was lying on the ground, with an icy crust, so that traveling on the unbeaten path was extremely difficult, and they did not arrive at their destined place until midnight, almost entirely exhausted and benumbed, as it was extremely cold. They were very kindly received by Bro. C. Gross, and soon recovered under his hospitable roof.

Bro. Lutz labored with great success at Wheeling and Naperville during that Winter, also in Stephenson County. In the latter place, near where Cedarville now is, his labors were blessed with a glorious revival in the month of February, the first important instance of the kind by the

instrumentality of our preachers in Illinois. The class of emigrants was thereby considerably increased and greatly encouraged. Bro. Lutz also undertook an exploring tour to Milwaukee and vicinity in the territory of Wisconsin, and met with many Germans who received him kindly. While Bro. Lutz was thus acting the part of a bold pioneer, preaching the word of life to the inhabitants of the impervious north-western counties, Bro. Einsel labored as much as his enfeebled state of health permitted, along Des Plaines and at Naperville, and God's blessings rested upon his labors.

In the beginning of May, 1840, the two brethren returned together across the lakes to Ohio, in order to attend the session of the Ohio Conference; they reported 18 newly received members, and a membership of 93 on the circuit. Although, as a matter of course, the work did not, under existing circumstances, progress rapidly, yet it gradually gained strength and influence; and had the infant societies and the other preaching places been regularly attended from the beginning, the work would undoubtedly have increased much more rapidly. But small as it then was tares were already making their appearance among the wheat. At Naperville appeared premonitory symptoms of a bad movement, which afterward resulted in ill feelings and divisions, to the great grief of the children of God and the injury of His work.

But while this fatal leaven was at work, an occurrence of the most pleasing character took place in another place of the circuit, at Dutchman's Point. While the preachers were at Conference, the class-leader of the Des Plaines society, moved by the Spirit, visited said place on a Sunday, where there had indeed been preaching, but no conversions had as yet taken place, in order to hold the first prayer-meeting with the people. The grace and power of God manifested themselves to such a degree during this meeting, that some persons were deeply affected and called upon God for mercy, till they had obtained peace and pardon. The work of grace began in this prayer-meeting, extended farther and farther, till all the Germans of the neighborhood came under its influence and professed to have found peace with God. This was the first revival in Illinois, in a country where there had been no members of the Society before, and the new class that was formed, consequently consisted altogether of new converts, and afterward prospered remarkably well.

### § 207. Biographical Sketches.

During this year there were four watchmen called from the walls of Zion, viz., Samuel Van Gunten and George Dressel, itinerant, and Father John Hammer and Henry Miesse, local preachers. All of them had been esteemed, pious, and useful members of the Church, and three of them as yet in the prime of life.

Samuel Van Gunten was an excellent, promising young man, a highly gifted preacher, of a noble, prepossessing appearance and genuine piety, for which reasons he was universally esteemed and beloved. In 1834 he was received by the Western Conference into the itinerancy, and became the assistant of Bro. Charles Hammer on Canton circuit; the following year he was John J. Kopp's colleague on Mansfield circuit. In the Spring of 1834 he was ordained deacon and appointed preacher in charge of Lancaster circuit, William Bergheimer being his colleague. The following year he was stationed for the second time on Canton circuit, and Henry Heiss became his colleague. In 1838 he was ordained elder and became the preacher in charge of Columbiana circuit, H. D. Grunder being his assistant. In the Spring of 1839, in March, he attended the General Conference in Center Co., Pa.

Shortly before this Conference had stationed him alone on Harmony circuit, in the western part of Pennsylvania: but soon after his return from General Conference, he was attacked by bilious fever and died after an illness of three weeks, on the 26th of April, in the 27th year of his life. He had to pass through some severe struggles on his death-bed, but finally died in the triumphs of Christian faith, and entered into the joy of his Master. Nothing is known of extraordinary revivals brought about by the instrumentality of this brother; but as he was conscientious and scrupulous in the discharge of his duties, there is no doubt that many were instructed and edified by his short ministry of five years. He was, as already stated, universally beloved, and had prospects of great usefulness before him; the Church lamented his death as that of one of its most talented and promising men.

After S. Van Gunten's death, George Dressel, who was then the superintending preacher on Canton circuit, was appointed as his successor, till another preacher could be obtained for the place, or different arrangements be made. But shortly after his arrival he was seized with the same fever that had finished Van Gunten's career, and died of it after a protracted illness of a few weeks, on the 27th of June, 1839, in his 30th year. Bro. Dressel is likewise said to have been a very talented and apparently still more promising man than Bro. Van Gunten. He had lived in a state of grace for about five years, and served as an itinerant for sixteen months, when he was already called to those regions whence no traveler returns. He was in great peace on his death-bed, and died in a firm hope of everlasting life.

The loss of these two promising young men, whose deaths were announced in the Paper, filled all that had been acquainted with them, with grief, and cast a universal gloom over the Church.

Some were of opinion, that they had not received proper medical treatment; but this cannot with certainty be proved. Even granted, that many a man's life has been shortened by improper medical treatment; yet the

deaths of the two brethren in question may have been the work of Providence, for holy and wise purposes, which eternity alone will disclose.

Father John Hammer, of Orwigsburg, Pa., died also this year, on the 6th of November, in the 67th year of his age. He had been one of the pillars of the Orwigsburg society, and did much to build it up. Many of the itinerants had become acquainted with him, and found a pleasant home under his hospitable roof. Till the 50th year of his life he had been a respectable member and for a long time an elder in the Lutheran Church, yet without having experienced a thorough change of heart. But when the great revival, of which mention has been made, broke out at Orwigsburg and vicinity, about sixteen years before his death, he and his whole family learned to see that a mere profession and form of Christianity are not sufficient for salvation; and he therefore at once commenced to pray with more fervency, and some time after, believing in the Son of God, he obtained the pardon of his sins and perfect peace of mind. He then joined the Evangelical Church and remained a consistent member till death. He served for some time as class-leader, discharging his duties faithfully and conscientiously, and in every respect he set an example worthy of imitation to those entrusted to his care. Subsequently he was licensed to preach, and served as a local preacher the remainder of his life. In his sermons he did not aim at systematic exposition, but generally gave utterance to those thoughts that filled his bosom, in demonstration of the Spirit and power, feeling deeply his responsibility, and manifesting a heart-felt concern for the salvation of his hearers.

He was always ready to assist his neighbors by word and deed, and took the deepest interest in the universal welfare of the human family. The scorn and contempt of the world and enemies of Christ, of which he as a follower of the Lord also received his share, he bore with exemplary courage, counting it an honor to be deemed worthy to suffer for Christ's sake. But God also granted him the pleasure to witness the conversion of many of his neighbors and of his whole family—of his wife and eleven surviving children. His faith in this respect had been so strong, that he had often said with positive assurance: "My children will all yet turn to God!"

For the last six years of his life he suffered from arthritis, to which came, about four weeks before his death, an inflammation of the liver, which accelerated his death. He bore his sickness and pain with Christian fortitude and perfect submission to the will of his Heavenly Father. Death, grave, and corruption, had no terrors to him. Once he said: "Why should I be afraid of the grave; has not my Lord and Master sanctified it?" At another time he said: "It is my desire to have no will of my own, but to be fully resigned to the will of God." Again he said: "I am about to set out on a long journey to a great city that is as yet unknown to me; but I

know the Lord of this city, whereof my heart is glad. I also have good fellow-travelers, who know the road well and will conduct me in safety thither!" And again he said: "As soon as I arrive there, I shall, first of all, prostrate myself before the throne of the Almighty, to thank him for what he has done for me!" While he lay on his death-bed, his pale lips whispered many a word of affecting exhortation, that caused his visitors to sigh, and at times to weep bitterly. Thus he was a blessing to humanity while living, and now his memory will not be less a blessing to those who were acquainted with him, and follow his pious advice and example.

Bro. Henry Miesse, son of Jacob Miesse, formerly of Berks County, Pa., departed this life in Fairfield County, Ohio, in the house of his brother, Dr. G. Miesse, on the 20th of January, 1840, in the thirty-first year of his earthly career. About ten years before his death he embraced religion, and joined the Evangelical Association, remaining a consistent member till death. He was for some time a local preacher, but could not preach much on account of his bodily weakness. From his youth he was subject to great sufferings, caused by a scrofulous disease, and but rarely enjoyed good health. Subsequently he was taken with pulmonary consumption and a violent inflammation of the tonsils, which closed his earthly career. He was fully resigned, and died in the triumphs of faith. His brother, Dr. Miesse, writes about him as follows: "For him we ought not to mourn, because his departure from this world was attended with joy and great faith; he left us many very beautiful and consoling exhortations, and testified even in the struggle of death, that it is good to die a Christian."

#### § 208. Three Conference Sessions in 1840.

In this year there were for the first time three annual Conference sessions held, viz: The East Pennsylvania at Schuylkill Haven, Pa., beginning March 25th; the West Pennsylvania in New Berlin, Pa., April 8th; and the Ohio in Walnut Township, Pickaway County, Ohio, April 13th.

As usual a number of preachers located, some on account of failing health and others to provide for their families. But quite a number of young men applied for reception into the itinerancy. The East Pa. Conference had a surplus of preachers, and the Ohio Conference was also well supplied, but the West Pennsylvania Conference experienced a great lack in this respect. Quite a number of their preachers located during the year and several entered the East Pa. and Ohio Conferences. For this reason the fields of labor in the West Pa. Conference were but feebly supplied. Many "double-handed" circuits received but one preacher. Conference therefore requested the friends to exercise patience and also earnestly to call upon God to send laborers into His vineyard. She also appointed a day of fasting and prayer, and requested all the preachers and members in the Conference district to observe it punctually, and make special requests to

God for his blessing upon the preached word and the spread of his Kingdom,\* and also ordered that a pastoral letter to the societies in the Conference district be written by a committee and published in the "*Christliche Botschafter*," which had a very favorable effect. With reference to the day of fasting and prayer, Bro. Henry Bucks, presiding elder of Carmel district, wrote as follows: "We have the cheering prospect that our district will furnish several laborers for the vineyard of the Lord this year. Our day of fasting and prayer July 4th, contributed its share toward this happy result. It is my sincere desire that it may become customary with us annually to appoint such a day."†

From this time forth the West Pennsylvania Conference made very good progress, and in a few years later it had quite outstripped the other two Conferences with regard to the number of members.

### § 209. Vigorous Progress of the Work.

The Conferences made more rapid progress at this time than ever before; it almost seemed as though they were vying with each other in promoting the work. The number of itinerants increased largely every year and the boundaries of the Conferences were extended in many directions. The newly awakened missionary spirit gave a powerful impetus to the work, promoting the more rapid spread and influence of the Association. Bro. George Brickley, in a report from his district, writes in regard to the salutary influence of this missionary spirit on the Church as follows: "I believe that the cause of missions in our Connection is a powerful help to promote the interests of the Kingdom of God, and I have not the least doubt that if our ministers had introduced this sacred cause at an earlier date, the Church would have increased much more rapidly. But we greatly rejoice that the cause is now advancing, and we believe that God will prosper it to his honor and glory. O ye friends of Zion, let us have faith and take courage to labor for the glory of God—yea, let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

Such was the general feeling of the ministry in those days with regard to the cause of missions. Bro. Henry Bucks said in a report from his district: "At every camp-meeting a missionary sermon was preached which was always attended with good success; at two of them we gave an opportunity to subscribe, and, although money was very scarce, yet large amounts were subscribed; a part was also paid at once. May the Lord bless this good cause to the salvation of many yet sitting in darkness and the shadow of death!"

Bro. Absalom B. Schaefer in a report from Lancaster circuit, Ohio Conference, wrote thus: "The cause of missions is progressing finely \* \*

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\*) The fourth of July was appointed as such a day of fasting and prayer—which was certainly remarkable.

†) This might be worthy of imitation also at the present time.

auxiliaries increase. Many friends speak favorably of the matter, and more will come to the help of the cause with their abundance of means." These auxiliaries belonged as yet to the General Missionary Society of the Church until the following session of the Ohio Conference when a Conference Missionary Society was organized with which these auxiliaries were then united.

Similar reports, speaking of the zeal of the members in this cause, were received from many directions. In but few places it met with opposition, arising from a lack of proper knowledge concerning its scope and object.

The first report of the Missionary Society presented at its annual meeting on the 21st of April, 1840, in New Berlin, Pa., will still more fully portray the state of this work at that time.

**"ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION."**

"With great joy and sincere gratitude to God, our Heavenly Father, we lay before our friends, the first annual report of the Missionary Society.

"Our hearts overflow with praise and gratitude to God, for having accepted our humble efforts, and crowned them with success beyond our most sanguine expectations. We would, therefore, call upon the friends of Zion, to join us in praising the Lord, 'for he has done excellent things; let this be known in all the earth.' He has not despised our insignificance, nor rejected our enterprise in the cause of missions; to His name be all the glory!

"But one year has elapsed since the formation of our Missionary Society, and small as its beginning was, it soon found many warm friends, advocates and supporters. The receipts of the Society amount to \$1434.31, including the \$500 which the Conference Missionary Society, that had been formed a year earlier, paid over into the parent board's treasury. The expenditures of the Society during the last year, we cannot exactly state, not having as yet received a full report thereof; but this much we know, that our treasury will be nearly, if not altogether empty, at the close of the year.

"The number of branch and auxiliary societies of the parent board, as far as we have been able to learn, is already over 30; and we have learned with pleasure, that many of our friends in various places are only waiting for an opportunity, to form themselves into auxiliary societies.

"The Society has not only found many warm friends and supporters, but God's blessings also have rested on the labors of its missionaries, of whom it employed four during the first year, all of whom labored on different fields and met with more or less success.

"Bro. Borkert labored in the city of New York, and has been sent there again for this year. It is true, his labors did not meet with as much suc-

cess as might have been desired, and as many of the friends undoubtedly expected ; yet it would seem, that his labors were not entirely lost, and we humbly trust the Lord will yet gather out of the Germans there a people unto Himself, zealous of good works.

"On Mohawk mission, in the State of New York, God has done great things in the awakening and conversion of many precious souls. The mission has already been formed into a circuit, and has received two preachers.

"Black Creek mission in Upper Canada, has also succeeded remarkably well, and has likewise been formed into a circuit, and supplied with two preachers. The membership, most of whom were converted during the last year, is already over eighty persons, and the prospects for the future are very favorable.

"Waterloo mission, in Canada, has also been owned and blessed of the Lord ; sinners have been awakened and converted, and a small society of about 30 members has been organized. According to Bro. Holl's report, the prospects for the future are very encouraging there also.

"The whole membership of the four missions is 166, 125 of whom are reported as having been converted during the last year. Truly, the Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad ! Two of these missions of last year having been changed into circuits, there remain but two ; but a new mission has been established this year in the city of Baltimore, Md. It is highly probable that the brethren of Ohio Conference will likewise send out some missionaries among the many Germans of the West, who are like sheep without a shepherd.

"Having such evidence of God's approbation, and the prospects of future success being so brilliant, we feel encouraged, and are resolved to continue the work in the name and to the honor and glory of God. We also call on all friends of Christ to take a deep interest in this glorious enterprise, and to support it with their prayers ; for we are fully persuaded that without the blessing of God all our labors and efforts will be in vain.

"We close our first annual report with the deepest gratitude to God, the giver of every blessing ; leaving our cause with Him, and confiding in His promises for all time to come.

W. W. ORWIG, Corresponding Secretary."

Ohio Conference, as had been expected, also established a mission, at its session in May following, partly in the State of Illinois, partly in the Territory of Wisconsin, appointing Bro. John Lutz their missionary. Thus the Connection had four missions again this year. The mission in the city of New York made but slow progress, as before stated ; but Waterloo mission, in Canada, was crowned with glorious results. At the close of the year, the latter numbered 96 members, 71 of whom had been received during the year.

Classes had been formed in Waterloo, Puslinch and Wilmot, and preaching places had been taken up in various other places, which were highly promising. When Bro. Joseph Harlacher, the missionary, wrote his fourth and last quarterly report of the mission, he was almost in a state of ecstasy, on account of what the Lord had done through him. Among other things he makes the following remarks: "I feel to call upon all my brethren and sisters, to praise the Lord with me, and to exalt together His holy name. Yea, 'let everything that hath breath, praise the Lord;' for He has done wondrous things."

#### § 210. The First Mission in Baltimore, Maryland.

The first mission in Baltimore, Maryland, served by Bro. Jacob Boas, began on a very small scale, and although it soon found friends and patrons, there were not wanting those who were displeased with and persecuted it. In the second quarter, a small class was formed, and regular prayer and class meetings were introduced. Bro. Boas rented a small church from the Methodists, on corner of Cove and Fayette streets, where he preached twice every Sunday, but to very small audiences. In the third quarter, matters took a more favorable turn—the church became crowded, conversions took place, and a considerable number of the members of Otterbein's Church there, seceded for certain reasons, and joined the small mission society; in this way the number of members rose already to 100, but was afterward more than doubled during the conference year. The little church was bought during the third quarter, but was soon too small, and even before the close of the first year, arrangements were made to build a new and spacious church in a more convenient part of the city. Those from Otterbein's Church, had been, to a great extent, members of the best standing and greatest influence in that society; and the work of grace in the mission society seems to have been genuine, and thus the society had a solid foundation. Bishop Seybert, who visited the mission at that time, expressed himself in a letter as follows:—

"On Friday, the 5th of February, 1841, I arrived at Baltimore in the evening, and found the brethren engaged in holding a love-feast, during a protracted meeting that had already been in progress for ten days. The friends spoke with great freedom of what the Lord had done for them. There were also a number of convicted and penitent souls in the meeting, who, without waiting for much entreaty, followed the invitation of Bro. Hesser, who attended the meeting, to come forward to the altar to pray for mercy and the pardon of their sins. Thus we had a happy waiting before the Lord, while the mourners obtained peace and pardon, and were enabled, with others, to shout and praise the Lord.

"I remained at Baltimore till the 11th, during which time we had affecting meetings, and several souls were made happy in the pardon of their sins. I was told that about sixty souls had been converted during

this meeting, among whom there are members of different religious denominations, also a few Catholics. The society already consists of more than 150 members, and is divided into seven classes. The lately purchased church—30 by 35 feet—is already too small to contain all those who desire to attend; it is therefore proposed to build a new and larger church in a more central part of the city, if practicable.

“With one trait of the public services I was especially pleased during my stay at Baltimore, which is, that our friends there are lively in their services, and you do not see sour faces and knit brows when any of God’s children praise Him aloud and shout for joy, under the influence of God’s Holy Spirit. I also observed, that the new converts were willing to lay aside all gorgeous attire—another trait which I was highly delighted with.

“O ye friends of Zion, who have thrown your mites into the missionary treasury, behold how richly God has blessed your gifts—praise the Lord for it.”

As this was one of the most successful and prosperous missions ever established by the Association, we lay the last quarterly report of Bro. Boas in full before our readers, hoping that it will be encouraging and instructive to them.

“Brethren :—It is difficult to find words in the human language, that will adequately set forth what the Lord has done in our midst, yea, language is altogether insufficient to express it properly. The amount of good that has been accomplished by the grace of God among the Germans of this city, will become fully known only before the throne of God; yes, only there will he be perfectly happy, who here has supported the cause of missions by his prayers and gifts. The Lord has richly, yea abundantly rewarded our efforts in this good cause. And who should not feel encouraged thereby, to continue in the support of so holy and blessed a cause? About one hundred souls have learned to know the Saviour as willing and able to save from sin, and with the Psalmist can now, with hearts full of heavenly joy, call on all that fear God, to come and hear from their lips what the Lord has done for their souls.

“Since last New Year, some have been willing to pray for pardon after almost every sermon, and every invitation to come to the altar of prayer, has been accepted by some. Here they waited for the Lord, and he inclined unto them, and heard their cries; he brought them out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set their feet upon a rock, and established their goings; and he put a new song in their mouths, even praises unto our God. Psalm 40.

“When I arrived here as missionary, we had but two members; now we have two hundred and fifteen. Many, O Lord, my God! are thy thoughts which are to usward; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee; if we would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered

"We also met with opposition from various directions ; but in every instance the Lord frustrated the designs of His enemies, and granted us glorious victories. We will wait for the Lord in prayer, in the firm assurance that he will continue to prosper the good work begun on this mission, till many—very many will yet say to their acquaintances, friends and relatives, as Moses said to Hobab, the son of Reguel, the Midianite, his father-in-law : ' We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it to you ; come thou with us, and we will do thee good ; for the Lord has spoken good concerning Israel.'

"As our present church, under existing circumstances, is entirely too small, we were compelled to make arrangements to build a new one ; it is to be plain, substantial and spacious, and with a grave yard which contains about two acres of ground, will cost about \$7000. But in order to meet these outlays, we shall be obliged to call upon our liberal friends in the country for help. We cherish the hope, that all of our friends who take a heart-felt interest in the work of God, will contribute something of their abundance toward this object. We must have a large house, if the work of God shall continue to prosper. I merely intended to touch upon this subject, as it will probably be laid fully before the Association in the columns of the *Christliche Botschafter*. I greet all the friends, and would entreat them to remember me and the Baltimore Mission in their prayers.

JACOB BOAS.

April 13, 1841."

As the society in Baltimore was engaged in building a new church, and had many other heavy expenses, it was thought best to continue it as a mission for another year ; after this it was changed into a station, supporting its own minister.

### § 211. More Victories.

The Illinois mission, that was located partly in the neighborhood of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, partly along Cedar creek, in Stephenson County, Illinois, was very inconveniently situated, the missionary having to travel on every round about 250 miles in order to fill six or eight appointments, and to re-cross a distance of 90 miles, besides often being exposed to great privations. Bro. John Lutz labored on this mission this year with truly apostolic self-denial. At the close of the year he formed a small class in Wisconsin, in the vicinity of Milwaukee, the members of which were scattered in every direction, about twenty miles in circumference, to the north, south and west of Milwaukee. This was the first society of the Evangelical Association in Wisconsin. John G. Esslinger (class-leader), his wife, the first person converted in Wisconsin through the instrumentality of our preachers, Jacob Martin and wife, the Eckert family, Martin Schulz and others, were its first members.

In the East Pennsylvania Conference the work spread considerably in some places, especially in the State of New York and in Upper Canada. This year the northern district numbered more newly received members than the two other districts of the conference together. The work had prospered there for several years previous to this. John M. Sindlinger labored then on the district with great success. Filled with great zeal to extend and enlarge its boundaries, he pushed forward with his preachers wherever there was an opening for the Word, taking great pains at the same time to advance the existing societies in piety and true godliness. On Mohawk circuit, under the charge of Christian Hummel and George Ramige, important awakenings took place in different parts, and the number of newly received members during the year was 124. On Lake circuit also, where Michael Lehn and David Fisher labored, the work prospered exceedingly in some places.

The society in the city of Buffalo, under the charge of Frederick Kreeker, was visited with some glorious revivals during this and the following year, thus gaining a solid footing. Likewise Buffalo circuit, under the charge of Philip Schwille, during this and the preceding year, extended considerably, and thus rose in influence. In North Bush a glorious work took place; H. Knob and P. Trautman were the first there who opened their houses to our preachers, and soon after gave their hearts to God. Father G. Scheuer and others soon followed, and thus a class of seventeen members was formed there in a short time. P. Trautman was the first class-leader in that part of country.

This year the brethren also commenced to labor in the city of Rochester, N. Y. Bro. Samuel Muck made the beginning, and afterward the brethren on Lake circuit took up the city as one of their regular preaching places, and preached there as often as they possibly could, without neglecting the other parts of their very extensive field of labor. At first they preached in a private house, afterward in a school-house; and when this was denied them, they preached again in a private house. January 10, 1841, a small class was formed there, who elected Bro. Voos as their leader. But the good cause had to pass through great difficulties, and made but slow progress. In 1842, the society built a small church; but not being able to keep it, they had to submit to its being sold. This was a heavy blow which almost annihilated the work commenced; but by and by it recovered, a better church was built, and the society afterward enjoyed a prosperous condition. Simultaneously with the first efforts made by the brethren in Rochester, they found entrance in Fairport, six or eight miles east of Rochester, where subsequently a flourishing society was organized.

Glorious revivals took place during this year at Orwigsburg, Schuylkill Haven and Pottsville, whereby these societies were considerably increased. During a protracted meeting at Lebanon, 50 souls were said to have found

pardon and peace. In Adamstown, Lancaster County, where the preachers had labored for several years, a glorious work of grace broke out during this conference year, which continued the whole of the following year. William Heim and John P. Kraemer were stationed there this year, and Henry Fischer and Christian Holl the next year. The society of Manheim was also blessed with a revival, and received a considerable addition during the year.

Philadelphia station had to pass through a severe trial this year. Jacob Vogelbach, who had labored there already the year before with apparently good success, disagreed with the society in the very beginning of this year. After having had a trial, he left the connection and subsequently went over to the Lutheran Church. This occurrence proved very disastrous to the society; although the popular Bro. Charles Hesser became Vogelbach's successor, yet not much could be done for the remainder of the year, and it required several years to heal the wound.\* The circuits of Reading, Milford and Lehigh, made but little progress during this year, and their accessions were small.

In West Pennsylvania Conference no particular revivals occurred during this year, except in Baltimore and on Center circuit; yet the work progressed more or less on all the circuits. Several of the camp-meetings were particularly blessed—some of them extraordinarily. One of these was held on the land of Abraham Orwig in Buffalo Valley, Union County, Pa., where a considerable number of precious souls were awakened and converted, and many more came to the knowledge of the truth. This meeting was greatly blessed and victorious from beginning to end. The presiding elder who superintended the meeting writes at the close of his report of it: "If the appearance and professions of some who were present, are a correct criterion, this meeting was a great blessing to the country and the whole neighborhood."

Another meeting was held on the land of Daniel Schreffler in Penn's Valley, Center County, Pa., where many sinners were convicted and converted, and at its close thirty new members were received into the church. Some of the new converts had already left the camp-ground, else the number would in all probability have been much larger.

### § 212. A Remarkable Occurrence.

At this place a most remarkable phenomenon occurred, which was published in the Paper as follows:—

"On Sunday, the 23d of August, a remarkable phenomenon took place

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\*) It is proper to remark here that no charges against Vogelbach's character were preferred. He still remained friendly toward the Evangelical Association. One reason for his withdrawal was his poverty, which made it impossible for him with his small salary, to support both his family and his parents.

during a violent storm, in the upper part of Penn's Valley, Center County, which cannot fail to convince every one of the particular providence of Him who possesses all power in heaven and on earth. It was as follows: In the woods of Daniel Schreffler, about three miles south-east of Old Fort, a place had been prepared during the week for holding a camp-meeting, to begin on Thursday following. The preachers' stand and several tents were already erected, and on the Sunday in question there was preaching on the camp-ground in the morning.

"In the afternoon the friends of the vicinity, with some of their neighbors, repaired to the camp-ground for the purpose of holding a prayer-meeting; while they were engaged in the first prayer, a terrible and devastating tornado came on, which they did not perceive until it was too late to make their escape out of the forest. Some, however, took refuge in a house close by; but others, wanting to follow, were terrified and prevented by the crashing and breaking of the trees. The consternation now was great; some screamed for fear, while others endeavored to calm them by holding forth the duty of trusting in God, others again shouted and praised God with a loud and joyful voice. But the most surprising thing was that the camp-ground and the meeting were not in the least injured by the storm; although in every direction around the camp, trees were broken down by scores. On the west side, whence the storm blew, the tops of the fallen trees touched the camp-ground; on the south and north sides, trees lay in heaps along the ground; and on the east side, the ground was almost covered with trees and branches; but not one tree on the large camp-ground, nor the tents, nor anything that was on the ground, was in the least damaged or injured. This fearful destruction of the woods around, from which only the camp-ground formed a providential exception, astonished all who saw it. Some did not credit the report till they visited the ground and saw the miracle for themselves. This occurrence made a deep impression on many of the inhabitants of the neighborhood, and was probably one of the main causes why so many became awakened and converted. The trees here were generally very tall; yet many of the tallest and thickest were broken off about 10 or 15 feet above the ground, while others were torn out by the roots." In another report of this event, the writer, among other things, says: "There was a tree of uncommon size, measuring 18 feet in circumference, near the camp-ground, which, as it could not be uprooted on account of its deep roots, was broken off near the ground. By this, the uncommon violence of the tornado may be estimated."

### § 213. Further Reports of Victories.

On Carmel district, situated for the most part on the Allegheny mountains, the camp-meetings were likewise victorious and crowned with conversions. The presiding elder, Henry Bucks, writes thus:—

"We had three camp-meetings in June, all of which were crowned with

awakenings and conversions of sinners, and glorious revivals among the people of God. At the last of these meetings in Brush Valley, Indiana Co., we had on the last day, during the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and afterward at an experience meeting, glorious times; it seemed as if heaven had opened over us, and the grace of God were descending upon us in showers so abundantly that the praise of God flowed from many lips, and some fell down, overcome by the love of God."

This year Center circuit seems to have surpassed all the other circuits of this Conference, in activity and increase. It held three camp-meetings; one in Penn's Valley, the other in Brush Valley, and the third in Nittany Valley, all of which were crowned with success, and a number of general and protracted meetings, some of which were remarkably victorious and blessed with many conversions; two protracted meetings especially, that were held in Nittany Valley, one at Jacob Best's, the other at Jacob Waky's, were times of great refreshing. At the close of the third quarter of the conference year, Bro. Henry Thomas, the superintending preacher of the circuit, remarks in his report as follows: "On the whole, we have had during the year many conversions on this circuit, and many more souls are deeply wounded and near the kingdom of God. Let all honor and praise be ascribed to God alone!"

Bishop Seybert, in a report during this year, makes the following remarks touching the West Pennsylvania Conference:—

"Notwithstanding the great scarcity of preachers in this Conference, matters prosper in general, and in some parts succeed remarkably well. Most of the camp-meetings have been richly blessed with awakenings, conversions and revivals. This shows that God is still with his people, however dark the prospects seemed to be. 'Truly, God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.' I lately attended a camp-meeting in this Conference, which was the seventh held this year on Salem district. It was held on the land of J. Krebs, in Perry township, Union County, Pa.; and as the presiding elder was prevented from being present by sickness, the brethren requested me to take charge of the meeting. The Lord was in our midst, granting His servants grace to preach His Gospel with power. We also had, all the time, very orderly and attentive hearers, many of whom became convinced of the necessity of repentance and a change of heart. On Monday and Tuesday, the last two days of the meeting, the ice broke, as the saying is, and everything seemed to be prepared for a revival. The hearts of the children of God were filled with his love; parents commenced to pray for their unconverted children, as the woman did, Matt. 15, 21-28, and others for their relatives. Hereupon such a power of repentance descended on the meeting, that sinners commenced crying out for mercy, and thus a glorious victory followed and some were filled with the Holy Ghost. During the last night we again had glorious times, sinners were converted, and the praise of God could be heard at a distance."

This year Ohio Conference received more new members than either of the two other Conferences. Its boundaries were extended in various directions, especially toward the West, in Indiana and Illinois. Miami circuit, situated for the most part in the State of Indiana, was considerably extended and made good progress under the charge of Absalom B. Schaefer.

During this year the first camp-meeting of the Association was held in the State of Indiana, on the land of John Dill, in Wayne County; it was abundantly blessed, and thus proved a benefit to many. Bro. Schaefer writes of this meeting: "This was indeed a time of the Son of man. \* \* \* From this time the work of conversion became more known in this part of the State, and found its advocates." In the preceding year, the city of Dayton, Ohio, was taken up as one of the preaching places of Miami circuit, and at the end of this year a class of twenty-one members was formed there. As this circuit had become very large by the industry and activity of the preachers, that portion of it lying in Indiana, was formed into a mission at the next session of Ohio Conference, and called White Water mission, with two preachers stationed there; two years after, it was made a circuit, and called White Water circuit.

Dayton was now served by the preachers of Miami circuit, until 1843; it was then made a mission, and a small church was built and dedicated as early as September of the same year. From that time the work has been progressing finely in Dayton, yet not without manifold oppositions and trials. Some time after, the small church was converted into a parsonage, and a new, spacious, and highly respectable church erected there.

#### § 214. Beginning in Cleveland, Ohio.

The city of Cleveland was taken up as a preaching place during this year (1840) by the preachers on Lake circuit, Ohio Conference.

The Brethren Adam Stroh and John Hall traveled on Lake circuit this year, and in a report of their circuit, they speak of the beginning and progress of their labors in Cleveland as follows: "We commenced since last Spring, to preach in the city of Cleveland also, and in spite of the rage of the devil, in spite of our having been pelted with stones by his servants, and denounced by the priests of Babel, the Sun of righteousness begins to shine into many a heart. Some have already been translated into the liberty of God's children, while others are almost persuaded to become Christians. We have a small class here, holding weekly prayer-meetings regularly, and we humbly trust that the Lord will also here gather himself a people zealous of good works."

Bro. Charles G. Koch communicated the following more minute report of the first labors of our ministers in Cleveland:—

"It was in the year 1840, that the Schnuerer families, father and son,

moved from Buffalo to Cleveland, at the instance of some relatives. Having arrived at Cleveland, however, they felt quite forsaken, finding neither members of the Society, nor other believers among the Germans, with whom they might meet for their edification, and hence they thought at times of returning to Buffalo. But, while they were laying their case before God, seeking his guidance with earnest prayer, the now sainted Bro. Adam Stroh felt a strong inward desire to seek an opening somewhere in Cleveland, in order to preach the Gospel to its German population. Following this impulse, he rode to Cleveland, crossing its streets, when a member of the Schnuerer family recognized him by his simple dress and costume as an itinerant, and accosted him. This was a moment of mutual joy and gratitude, and both parties saw in this meeting the guiding hand of Providence and the answer to their mutual prayers.

"After this there was regular preaching in Cleveland during the year, as this appointment was then added to the circuit. The word proved efficacious, and as early as the first year arrangements were already made to build a church. A certain man, favorably disposed to the cause, granted them a building lot near the shore of the lake, for temporary use, without charge.

"With the aid of the friends of Lake circuit and others, a small church, 28 by 38 feet, was erected and dedicated as early as the beginning of August, 1841. In the Spring of said year, Cleveland was taken up as a mission, and Lewis Einsel appointed its missionary. He received nine persons during the year into the Church, but was also obliged to expel several.

"The following two years, Bro. Henry Heiss was the missionary; but the work progressed slowly, having to struggle with many difficulties. In 1844 and 1845, Nicholas Gehr was missionary there; but the progress of the mission was still very slow and feeble. In the Fall of 1845, the small frame church was moved from the lake shore to a lot owned by the society, about a mile southward, at the south-western corner of Eagle and Erie streets; which was a real improvement, as thenceforth the number of hearers increased considerably, and the prospects for the future became better every year. Under Gehr's administration, the Sabbath-school was already in a flourishing condition, and subsequently improved still more; yet not without vicissitudes. But the society, in general, increased but slowly, and its membership remained small."

John J. Kopp mentions in a report of his district a large and highly blessed camp-meeting, held this year on Canton circuit, on the land of John Mattinger. It numbered 50 tents, and more than 200 communicants celebrated the Lord's supper. Matters went on very well in different parts of Lake circuit, as well as in various places of several of the other fields of labor of this Conference, in the States of Ohio and Indiana.

## § 215. Entrance into Chicago, Ill.

On Illinois circuit, which had seven regular preaching places and 400 miles in circumference, the Brethren Isaac Hoffert and Daniel Kern traveled this year ; they labored with a great deal of self-denial and also success ; for although their labors were not blessed with great awakenings, yet by their strictly evangelical walk and conversation, they exerted a very salutary influence upon the societies, and thus prepared the glorious success of the work in subsequent years.

They turned their special attention to Chicago, and preached there in private houses, in a carpenter's shop, especially in the northern part of the city, called New Buffalo. About 12 or 15 persons were converted during the year, and the brethren formed them into the first class of the Society in Chicago. The Brothers Willemer, Beste, Silke, Schenk, and others, were the first converts. According to the census of 1840, Chicago then numbered 4853 inhabitants, and being a conflux of emigrants from every direction, it was a very immoral place. But there being as yet no other services there in German than those of our preachers, they were very well attended, although there was preaching only every other Sunday. Our labors among the Germans soon attracted the attention, as well as the respect and interest of the religious portion of the English population of the place, and even many Germans respected our Church on account of the uprightness and honesty that characterized our first members of the West in their business transactions. But the small society had no lack of persecution, either. A great deal of reproach and slander was brought on by the strange phenomena, that took place at times in their meetings ; as sinners frequently during the sermon and elsewhere fell suddenly to the ground as if struck dead, screaming for mercy, and then all at once leaping up, shouting, and praising God for the pardon of their sins. This kind of exercise was pretty general, both in towns and in the country of the West. Yet such bodily exercise is of little account, if only the heart and conduct are right.

The Evangelical Association attaches no importance to these strange bodily exercises, and is far from recommending them ; although it has always been, and still is, in favor of a lively and animated service of God.

As in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and in other large cities, so also in Chicago many souls were converted from time to time, without, however, increasing our society proportionably in numbers ; for many of the members annually moved into the country, strengthening the old societies as well as forming even new ones there.

In the Fall of this year, Illinois was for the first time visited by one of our presiding elders. Bro. John G. Zinser, whose district embraced the far distant West, paid the societies there this welcome visit, in the months

of September and October, and assisted the brethren in holding several general meetings. This first visit of the presiding elder in the West imparted to our work there a powerful impulse, both the preachers and the infant societies being encouraged thereby, and because the claims of the West, which were now fully understood by him, were, by an influential minister, laid before the Ohio Conference.\* Both the Illinois circuit and the Illinois mission were at the close of the year in a promising condition; and the brethren who labored there during the year amid many hardships and trials, are indeed worthy to be held in grateful remembrance, since it is questionable whether any of our preachers were at any time exposed to greater privations than they.

### § 216. Prosperous Enterprises.

The Publishing House was at this time in a prosperous condition. The demand for books, especially Sunday-school books, constantly increased in the Association, and the preparations made for the publication of the German pocket Bible, took a more favorable turn, and secured the carrying out of the enterprise. The patrons of the Paper increased likewise, and its sphere of action extended more and more. During this year its columns were especially filled with articles discussing the claims of the cause of missions, with missionary reports, both from home and foreign missions. This had a tendency to increase the interest of the Society in this glorious cause, which was thereby greatly promoted. A practiced and influential minister remarked in this year, with reference to the Periodical:—

“The *Christliche Botschafter* seems to become more popular every day; and there is reason to hope that the number of its subscribers and its sphere of usefulness will increase more and more, provided its agents and friends do their duty, recommending it as it deserves. It always has something for the heart, and is like a friend coming from a distance and bringing a large amount of good news, and imparting instruction on different subjects.”

The cause of Sunday-schools likewise became more popular every year in the Association, and its glorious results began to show themselves at this time in the awakening and conversion of many of the scholars of our Sunday-schools. They were, however, not yet generally introduced, and there was room left for many improvements even where they existed; and this, alas! is still too much the case at present.

The membership of the Association at the close of this conference year was 8,992, and the increase during the year about 100. On account of the incomplete report of the East Pa. Conference for the previous year, the increase of this year cannot be stated accurately.

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\*) A round on this district required a journey of *two thousand miles*—which Bro. Zinser made on horseback!

## § 217. Biographical Sketches.

This year death again took its victims from the ranks of the preachers. Four of them fell by this "*king of terrors*," who, however, comes without terror to the faithful servant and child of God. Those who had finished their earthly career, were: Father Michael Maize, Leonard Zimmerman, Solomon Altimos and William Berghaimer.

Father Michael Maize, residing two miles east of New Berlin, Union County, Pa., was one of the first who, west of the Susquehannah, received our preachers, and became a member of the Society. Its first two preachers, Albright and Walter, already found a home under his roof, and ever after his house was a pleasant home for the preachers, till his death. At first, he, as well as those of his neighbors who set out at that time to serve God, had to suffer a great deal of opposition and persecution from the world and the unconverted nominal Christians. But, formerly, he was hated more than others, on account of his zeal for the honor of God, and for his liveliness during divine service. He lived and died a worthy member of the Society, serving as an officer, both as class-leader and local preacher, nearly the whole period of his Christian career; although he never preached a great deal. He also had the honor of having the first camp-meeting of the Association held on his land, in the month of May, 1810. After having served the Lord for about 35 years, he died in the 72d year of his pilgrimage, on the 4th of March, 1841. Father Maize raised a numerous family, and most or all of his children followed the faithful example of their father, thus verifying the words of the wise man: 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.'

Leonard Zimmerman, a resident of Manheim township, Lancaster Co., Pa., died on the 17th of December, 1840, aged about 58 years. He was converted in his younger years, by means of Mr. Albright's preaching, and is said to have had a very severe struggle, so much so that even Mr. Albright declared he had never seen the like before. In 1811, when the connection numbered but three circuits, eight itinerants, and 740 members, Bro. Zimmerman was received into the itinerancy and served till 1821, when he was obliged to locate on account of bodily infirmities. For the rest of his life he was an active and useful local preacher.

Being a tall and stout man, moving and speaking slowly, somewhat bent, very plain in his dress, of an humble, yet fearless appearance, he filled the hearers with respect wherever he rose to preach. Though naturally not a gifted orator, yet when he became excited, his countenance brightened, his delivery became fluent, his voice powerful and piercing, and a great commotion of the audience was the usual result. This was especially the case when he preached at camp or other extra meetings. Sometimes, while preaching, he was so filled with the power of God that he leaped, shouted, and praised God with a loud voice in the pulpit; this, however, he did with

the greatest decorum and with good effects on the hearers. Once, it is said, he preached in a place where the people were very wicked, threatening to put down the small band of believers, and everything looked gloomy in the meeting. All at once, Bro. Zimmerman commenced to praise God, to shout and to leap; and when he was asked how he could do so under so discouraging circumstances, he replied: "Oh, I did it to spite the devil!" He, with all the first preachers of the Evangelical Association in general, had to suffer a great deal of persecution, scorn and contempt, for the sake of the truth; but bore it all as a brave soldier of his divine Master with Christian fortitude, rejoicing that he was counted worthy to suffer reproach for the sake of Christ.

The first two years of his itinerancy he spent on Northumberland circuit—the first year under John Erb, the second as the superintending preacher with two preachers on trial for his colleagues; the third year he traveled on York, and the fourth on Lancaster circuit; the fifth on Schuylkill, and the sixth again on York circuit; afterward he traveled on Columbia, Center, Lancaster, and lastly on Franklin circuit. Bro. Zimmerman was sickly for a number of years, suffering at times great pains, but bore it all with exemplary patience. His death was sudden, caused as was supposed, by apoplexy. Thus this soldier of Christ finished his warfare, and entered into the rest and joy of his Master.

Solomon Altimos was received in 1833 as an itinerant on trial, by the Eastern Conference, and stationed with Bro. Daniel Kehr on Lake circuit, in the State of New York. The next year he was appointed preacher in charge of Shenandoah circuit, in Virginia, and labored there with success. The third year he was preacher in charge of Indiana circuit, in Pennsylvania, and had Jacob Boas for his colleague; the fourth year he superintended Armstrong circuit, which then belonged to Western Conference. But being subject to epileptic fits, that often caused a great deal of alarm when he was away from home, and increased in violence from time to time, he took no more appointments from the Conference, but traveled about in the country according to his pleasure, preaching in different places with good effect. This he did mostly in the counties of Bucks, Lehigh, and Northampton, Pa., in 1837. Afterward he moved to Michigan, traveled a great deal in that State and the northern part of the State of Indiana, preaching often and forming here and there small classes, as already stated in this history.

In 1839 he came to Pennsylvania, attended the session of General Conference in March, and laid before that body a report of his labors and the prospects of the north-western regions. Notwithstanding his disease becoming worse, he did not quit preaching, but traveled about as much as he possibly could. Although he was somewhat odd and singular, probably the consequence of his disease, he was, nevertheless, a talented and powerful speaker, fearing neither the power of hell nor of the world. He attacked sin and vice of every shape without fear, and with great seriousness and

zeal insisted on immediate conversion. But his career and warfare were not long. His death was announced in the Paper of May 1, 1841, in the following words: "Solomon Altimos is no more—he died on the 18th of March, at his home in Ash township, Monroe Co., Michigan, of his old disease (epilepsy). He had nineteen fits in succession, and then fell asleep to awake no more till the voice of the archangel will raise the dead. He was for about eight years a preacher of the Evangelical Association. By his death the Church has lost a faithful shepherd, his neighbors a sincere teacher and servant, and his wife and two children a kind husband and father. Still they need not mourn as those who have no hope."\*

William Berghheimer departed this life July 23, 1840, in the 26th year of his age. His name was in the list of itinerants of the Western (now Ohio) Conference, from 1836 to 1840. The first year of his regular itinerancy, he spent on Lancaster circuit in Ohio, under the superintendence of Bro. S. van Gunten; the second on Indiana circuit, Pa., under Daniel Kehr. He was then ordained deacon, and appointed preacher in charge of Armstrong, and the fourth year of Maumee circuit, and thus finished his itinerant and soon after also his earthly career. From the notice of his death in the Paper of August 15th, 1840, we learn that he was converted in his youth, and died of consumption, after a lingering disease and confinement to his bed for about two months; that he had been kindly treated, and had died, in the house of John Brecht, in Fairfield County, Ohio; that he bore his disease with great patience, and expressed at all times a lively hope of eternal life. Some of his last words were: "The work will soon be finished!" and thus he ended his career.

### § 218. Full Salary!

In the year 1841, the East Pa. Conference held her second session in the Evangelical church in Fayette township, Seneca County, New York, beginning March 17th. This was the first Annual Conference session ever held in the State of New York, and it was a source of encouragement to the

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\* The author remembers Bro. Altimos quite vividly. He was in person a tall, stately man. In his social intercourse he was quite impressive and his public ministrations were very powerful. He was fearless, witty, keen, and somewhat eccentric. At a camp-meeting held in the year 1837 on the land of Christopher Schubert in Upper Milford, Pa., he preached on the narrow and broad ways—Matth. 7. 13, 14.—and described seventeen classes of sinners careering down the broad way to perdition. He portrayed some of them so exactly that several guilty persons fled from the ground for fear they might be *arrested*! He knew how to stop the mouths of scoffers and gainsayers. One of these attacked him on one occasion in a public meeting, saying he would prove by the Scriptures that Altimos was preaching false doctrine. Bro. Altimos soon discerned him and asked him whether he could tell where the Psalms could be found?—whereupon this hero answered apologetically that he was not a learned man, but he thought the Psalms might be found somewhere in the New Testament! This finished him. Bro. A. was a brave soldier of the Cross, and a faithful follower of the Lamb.

members in the northern part, as well as a pleasure to the preachers, notwithstanding that the great majority had to undergo a long journey over the mountains to get there. Two preachers located, and two new ones were received into the itinerant ministry.

The preachers received their salary in full—that is to say: each single preacher received \$60—each married preacher \$105 and \$15 for each child under fourteen years, together with “reasonable traveling expenses”! This was the first time in the history of any Conference that this occurred; it was therefore something altogether new and cheering. Much gratitude was felt that they had now for once reached this point. *Full salary!*—and there was yet a surplus in the treasury which was then divided among the preachers of this Conference who had had a deficit the year before. Conference felt quite happy over this event and expressed its sentiment in the following manner: “This is a clear evidence that our friends are growing in liberality and are no longer willing that their preachers resign their sacred office on account of temporal cares.”

The West Pa. Conference held its session again in New Berlin, Pa., on the 7th of April. Several preachers located and five entered into the itinerancy.

The session of the Ohio Conference began in the church at Lafayette, Wayne County, (now Ashland County) Ohio, May 12th. Four preachers located, and the same number was received into the itinerancy. Columbiana and Canton circuits were united and supplied with three preachers. Illinois circuit was changed into Des Plaines circuit. Three new missions: Whitewater mission, Ft. Wayne mission, and Cleveland mission were established, and the Illinois mission, though its boundaries were changed, was continued.

#### § 219. Advance of the West in the Cause of Missions.

From this time on the West took the lead in the cause of missions, the strong current of western immigration opening doors almost everywhere for the establishment of new missions, more than could be supplied for want of men and means. But as missions in the West were generally far less expensive than in the maritime cities and other large places of the East, many of them being from the very start nearly and ere long altogether self-supporting, the Ohio Conference was able to establish more missions than either of the two other Conferences; moreover, the cause of missions was proportionately better supported in the West than in the East.

At this time the Association began to extend more rapidly than ever before; but at the same time, felt also more keenly than ever, its want of a sufficient number of properly qualified men and of means, for the successful prosecution of the work.

The Germans who had emigrated from Europe or from the middle States to the West, were, in very many places, entirely destitute of all the

means of grace. The older German Churches did little or nothing for them, and in some places the people had, as long as they had lived there, not heard a single sermon in German, and English preaching they did not understand to their satisfaction. Such was the condition in which our preachers found many Germans in the States of Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and in the Territories of Wisconsin and Iowa. Some, it is true, had their pastors, but such pastors!—most of them were outcasts and scoundrels, drunkards, voluptuaries, proving rather a curse than a blessing. In this way our preachers took the lead in many places of the West, and retained it also in many of them; but they would have done a great deal more, had their number been larger.

This was a very prosperous and successful year to the Association. Never before had its increase been so large, and never were its general prospects so bright as now. The work of the Lord progressed not only on all its fields of labor, but in every part and corner in the East and West, South and North. The ministers were, in general, filled with the proper spirit to carry forward and extend the work of God; and the many cheering reports of its glorious success and prosperity, which filled at that time and afterward the columns of the Paper, tended greatly to increase their zeal and activity. Whoever will take the time to peruse the many cheering and encouraging reports of the work of God, that appeared in the Paper of 1841 and 1842, can easily satisfy himself of the truth of this statement. In an article on revivals, published this year, we find among others the following remarks, touching the subject in question:—

“In spite of the rage of the devil and his servants, and the charges of disorder, fanaticism, and excess, of such as, either from envy or malice, seem unable to bear that the so-called ‘Albrights’ meet with so much favor and find so many followers, the boundaries of the Evangelical Association extend more and more, and the increase of its membership grows more rapidly from time to time. The false prophets who in the beginning predicted its speedy failure, have long since been confounded; and the strong prejudices of the common people have, to a great extent, disappeared, since the principles, doctrines, and Discipline of the Society have come to be better understood; so that many who used to look upon the little band with contempt, have commenced to fear it. In most places it will not do any longer to attack them by bands armed with clubs and stones, sometimes led by a Rev. gentleman, or to denounce them indiscriminately as fanatics, deceivers, and deceived wretches.”

Another writer remarked:—

“This conference year is a highly blessed one to our Church. The work of the Lord extends mightily; men are awakened and converted to God by scores. On all circuits and stations yet heard from, revivals of religion have taken place. Hence it is evident, that the more the Evan-

gelical Association is spoken against, the more she extends, and the more glorious is her progress."

#### § 220. Violent Attacks upon the Association.

At this time there were once more violent attacks made upon the Association, from different quarters ; its manner of proceeding with mourners, its active and lively services, were the main points of attack. Pains were taken to prove that these things were fanaticism and disorder. Some periodicals especially busied themselves in this way, in order to prevent the rapid extension and increase of the Connection, and to break down its influence. And as it fearlessly and boldly attacked the wickedness and immorality of many nominal Christians, disapproved and rejected their dead and hypocritical services, it was also accused of fault-finding. In order to check the frequent desertion from their ranks to ours, some clergymen of different denominations took great pains to cast reproach upon us, and to fill their people with prejudices. Both from the pulpit and in the family-circle they labored for this end ; while others wrote libelous pamphlets to blacken our character.

The *Botschafter* of 1841 says with reference to such pamphlets : "The libelous pamphlet of pastor — against the Evangelical Association, deserves, in our estimation, no notice. Such *ignes fatui* generally vanish in a short time, doing little or no harm ; on the contrary, they sometimes rather serve to stimulate the people to read our books and tracts, in order to become acquainted with our doctrines ; and in this way they do us more good than harm. We would therefore advise Brother K., not to trouble himself with writing a refutation of those false and shameless charges."

The *Botschafter*, however, was not remiss in those days in defending the Association against attacks of this kind. With what fervor and intrepidity it discharged its duty in this respect, appears from the following article which appeared in its columns at the close of this conference year ; this article also confirms what has been said on the great prosperity of the Connection at that time. It is as follows :—

"At no previous time have so many and so great awakenings and revivals taken place in the Evangelical Association, as has been the case for some years past. The missionary spirit that has animated the Church at large, and its ministry in particular, for a number of years, seems to have contributed largely toward this glorious result ; but more especially the increased efforts to bring about revivals by protracted and other meetings, seems to have exerted a powerful influence.

"Notwithstanding the great want of itinerants, and the many oppositions and impediments the Evangelical Association extends with increasing rapidity. Its membership increases by thousands, and the work runs from

town to town, from State to State. For these reasons the Society is in these days more envied, slandered, and abused, by various corrupt Churches and proselyters, than ever before ; though the persecution is not as rude as formerly. Churches, preachers, and editors, some of whom seem to be rationalists and infidels ; drunkards, swearers, and Sabbath-breakers, etc.; moralists and formalists—who bite and devour each other, differing as widely in their religious sentiments and rites, as the languages at the building of the tower of Babel, seem to have united for the purpose of rushing upon the hated ‘Albrights,’ as they call us, with their slanders and calumnies, and of branding them as the most pernicious, dangerous and selfish of all.

“ Pilate and Herod, at other times enemies, here make common cause, and become friends. But they generally find no occasion against us, except concerning our mode of worship, (Dan. 6: 4, 5.) which they find disorderly, noisy, and sectarian. That our members lead wicked or immoral lives, or that we admit drunkards and profane swearers to the Lord’s supper, they do not say a word ; but of our disorderly services, our proselyting, fault-finding spirit, they complain most bitterly. They know too well where the shoe pinches, and hence their silence on certain points. Yet, if the poor fellows knew how little we care for their boisterous scolding, and how little harm they do us thereby, they would certainly be silent.

“ But the Evangelical Association will not suffer itself to be disturbed by such little souls, even if they should discharge their whole infernal battery against us, but will go on in its endeavors to lead as many souls to Christ as possible. And if she continues to enlarge her boundaries, and to increase her membership in this way, which every Church has a right to do, no one need or will find fault with it, except only envious sectarians and proselyters.

“ If any of our members think they can enjoy and edify themselves better in some other Church, they are at perfect liberty to leave us and join the same ; and if their standing in our midst has been good, we give them a certificate to that effect. And members of other denominations should have the same liberty to join us. Let every Church preach the pure Gospel with power and unction, keeping up lively services in the sanctuary, and enforcing the Discipline, and there will scarcely be any room left for complaints of deserting members ; then those that leave, will generally be such as are no blessing to any Church. But that people should leave churches which are so corrupt as to retain profane swearers, dancers, gamblers, and drunkards as members from year to year, and to admit them to the Lord’s supper, none but hirelings and arch-sectarians will find fault with.”

It is true, this is strong and unsparing language ; but whoever is acquainted with the abominable and mean attacks on the Society, will

readily excuse the same and ascribe it to a holy zeal for the truth and honor of the Lord.

### § 221. Blessed Mission Work.

This year we had six missions ; four in Ohio, one in East Pa., and one in West Pa. Conference, which were all crowned with more or less success. New York mission especially succeeded beyond all expectation, after almost all hope as to its final success had been abandoned ; sore trials, however, had not been wanting. Bro. Michael Eis, who had been appointed missionary there at the last session of the East Pennsylvania Conference, was, on account of his failing health, obliged to bid farewell to the mission toward the end of September. Bro. Christian Meyers was then appointed his successor, and arrived there Oct. 29th, to the great joy of the little band. In his first report he remarks thus : " The brethren and sisters were greatly delighted with my arrival, and thanked God with tears of joy for having sent them another minister. Although they were about four weeks without a preacher, yet they had remained firm in the service of the Lord. It is true, the enemy had not been idle during this time ; the world had rejoiced and said, that everything would now be frustrated again ; and some individuals had even taken the pains to visit those who had received the truth, in order to turn them away from us. But hitherto their efforts have failed, and our small society, instead of decreasing, has had an addition of one member. The prospects of this mission are at present very bright."

Bro. Meyers had been a local preacher for several years in Philadelphia, and this year set out as an itinerant. His thorough acquaintance with the German character and city life, gave him great advantages and qualified him eminently, before many others, for the important post he was now called to fill. He justified all reasonable expectations ; the affairs of the mission took a more favorable turn, and at the close of the year it numbered 57 members.

But now the want of a church and graveyard was deeply felt, without which two requisites no enterprise of the kind can permanently prosper. Several plans were, accordingly, devised, but alas ! none carried out. Bro. Charles Hesser proposed the following plan for the erection of churches in larger towns, and wished to have it applied first to the city of New York, viz., that each member of the Association should lay by one cent a week for this purpose, whereby between four and five thousand dollars would have been raised annually at that time.

Bro. John P. Leib was of opinion, that this plan, although very good in itself, would scarcely do for New York, as it would work too slowly, and the necessity for a church there was very urgent. He therefore proposed instead a ten thousand dollars plan for New York ; which was, that 1000 persons should obligate themselves to pay \$10 each. Strong efforts were

made to realize this plan, and much was written in the Paper respecting it, but all to no purpose.\*

A third plan, devised by a sister in Ohio, to raise \$1000 by as many subscriptions of \$1 each among the sisters, was but partially carried out; and there were not quite \$2000 raised by means of the two latter plans, that of Bro. Hesser having been dropped altogether. Thus the infant society in the city of New York was indeed greatly disappointed in its expectations; but, nevertheless, the preparatory step toward erecting a church finally succeeded; it progressed, however, slowly, and not without great difficulties.

This year Baltimore mission prospered as well as the first; the society increased considerably, and the church edifice was completed and dedicated to the service of God, December 12, 1842. At the close of this year the society numbered between 250 and 300 members, and was in a highly prosperous condition; strange as it may seem, it never far exceeded this number, but was often a great deal below it; notwithstanding some great revivals and many conversions, its membership seldom reached 300. The deaths of many of the old members, the removal of others, as well as the expulsion and egression of considerable numbers, prevented an increase of the numerical strength of the society, while in other respects many improvements were made.

Ohio Conference had four missions this year, which, however, on account of their great extent, could not properly be attended to, that of Cleveland alone excepted. Illinois mission had more than 300 miles in circumference, and but one preacher, Bro. Isaac Hoffert, and his health was very delicate. Yet he labored not in vain. He had thirteen regular appointments, of which the region of the present Cedarville and Sharon, Henry County, were the principal places. In each of these two places there was a class of 20 members—the only classes of his mission which lay, for the most part, fallow and extended beyond the Mississippi. Hence the travels of the missionary were not only connected with great hardships, but even with danger, especially in Winter and Spring, when the waters were high.

On Fort Wayne mission, situated for the most part in the State of Indiana, around Fort Wayne, and extending over parts of 7 or 8 counties, Bro. John Hall labored amid great difficulties and discouragements. He explored and occupied an extensive territory, formed also several small classes, and thus prepared the way for the future. Many parts of the country were very thinly settled in those days, the people were generally poor, and the roads bad, so that after a day's journey man and beast were often consid-

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\*) This well intended "ten thousand dollars" plan actually frightened the Church. The members were not yet accustomed to such sums for church edifices. Bro. Hesser's plan would probably have succeeded better.

erably worn out, and had then to content themselves with scanty food and bad lodgings.

In the following year the Brethren John Hall and John Nicolai labored on the mission, but without great success; yet their labors were not altogether in vain. They encountered great opposition by would-be pastors, and still had to deny themselves in many things. In 1843 this mission was allotted to the Brethren Daniel Kern and George A. Blank; it made fine progress this year, conversions took place, new preaching places were taken up, and between 60 and 70 members received. The following year Bro. Blank and Simon A. Tobias were appointed the missionaries there. But Bro. Tobias had to return home, was taken sick, and Bro. Blank was thus left alone for a great part of the year. He was, however, assisted a great deal by his presiding elder, Absalom B. Schaefer, who labored with indefatigable perseverance and great self-denial as a pioneer in the State of Indiana, and was also permitted to see much fruit of his labors. Honor, to whom honor is due. It may be observed here, that when the Ohio Conference was divided, this mission fell to Illinois Conference and in 1844 consequently belonged to the latter.

#### § 222. Successful Camp-meetings.

The camp-meetings during the conference year were richly blessed. At the close of a report from Salem district, West Pa. Conference, it is said: "Our camp-meetings seem to have caused a revival over the whole district." By means of one of them the work was introduced into the village of Hartleton, Union County, Pa.; some persons were converted at this meeting, others began to seek the Lord and a class was formed there.

On Carmel district also some highly blessed camp-meetings were held; one of the most blessed took place on York circuit, Zion district, where more than 400 members are said to have been present at times, and about 50 persons to have found the pardon of their sins. There were 46 tents on the ground, occupied by about 80 or 90 families. This circuit was for many years renowned for its large and good camp-meetings; almost every family tented, both rich and poor, and the result was always good. But afterward many lost their courage or inclination to tent. Whether they regarded such meetings as not so necessary any more, there being plenty of churches everywhere, or whether their interest in the cause of God abated, we will not presume to decide. These remarks apply to many other circuits in all Conferences, especially the older. Of the camp-meeting on Lycoming circuit, Bro. Benjamin Epley remarks: "Our camp-meeting last Fall was blessed beyond all expectation, with awakenings and conversions."

Bishop Seybert mentions a camp-meeting held in Fairfield County, Ohio, on the land of Bro. Brecht, as follows: "The very first evening we had blessed times. On Friday the meeting grew in interest, many hearts

were touched, and praying and wrestling with God followed. On Saturday afternoon everything seemed favorable for a revival. At first a solemn silence pervaded the assembly, followed by a powerful commotion of both saints and sinners. Many tears were shed by the children of God, while praying for the conversion of their friends and relatives, till sinners cried to God for mercy and pardon. Toward evening a gang of ruffians and Belial's children had come to the camp-ground, for the avowed purpose of breaking up the meeting ; but the Lord frustrated their design, by sending a heavy storm with lightning and powerful peals of thunder, whereby the ruffians became so frightened and tame, that we could continue our exercises in peace, without further disturbance, praying with and instructing the mourners."

In Dry Valley, Union County, Pa., a glorious work of grace took place during this year, under the superintendence of George Schaefer and Joseph Truby ; it began with a protracted meeting, held in the house of Isaac Eyer, toward the close of October. A considerable number were converted, and joined the Church. Old Union circuit prospered throughout, this year.

In East Pennsylvania Conference many glorious revivals took place this year. The number of the newly received members within this Conference district amounted to nearly 1000, and its boundaries were greatly extended, especially in the North, in the State of New York and in Canada.

In Schuylkill Haven and Pinegrove, glorious revivals took place, under the pastoral labors of Bro. Francis Hoffman. The society of Schuylkill Haven was considerably increased, and that of Pinegrove founded this year. Also at Lebanon and Millerstown, five miles above Lebanon, cheering awakenings took place, under the pastorage of Bro. Daniel Berger. At the last mentioned place a protracted meeting was begun January 28th, which is said to have resulted in the conversion of about 100 souls. The number of mourners at the altar was sometimes from 30 to 35, and on one evening 31 souls are said to have found peace and consolation. Many of the new converts united with us, and arrangements were made forthwith, to build a church ; but the society being so very small yet, the enterprise did not succeed without great difficulties.

This year the Philadelphia society commenced to prosper again. Bro. Hesser remarks in a report of the society as follows : "On Christmas we commenced a protracted meeting, which lasted twelve days. The Brethren Leib, Maize, and Boas, had come to our assistance. Between 20 and 30 souls were converted during the meeting, most of whom joined our society. The work is still progressing, and almost every week we have some conversions. \* \* \* \* Our society is, on the whole, quite revived and in fine spirits ; my prayer is, that harmony, love, and peace, may prevail more and more.

"In the vicinity of Germantown also a glorious work of grace has begun, and our prospects here are, on the whole, very good. I also take great pleasure in being able to state, that most of them who with Vogelbach had left us, have come back, and are glad that they are at home again among their brethren. \* \* \* \* Our Sabbath-school is likewise in a highly flourishing condition, numbering about 200 scholars. Considering the powerful opposition we have to encounter, we can truly say : The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

On Milford and Lehigh circuits, matters went better again this year, especially at Allentown. Bro. Michael F. Maize, the preacher in charge of Lehigh circuit, writes in November, referring to Allentown : "The Lord has commenced a glorious work here, during a protracted meeting ; a considerable number have been converted to God, and many more have been awakened. We expect a rich harvest this Winter." Bro. Leib writes, referring to these two circuits : "In spite of all opposition, the Lord has done wonders. Although we have not occupied a very large field, yet I venture to say that we have not been idle in cultivating what we have. The work of God is still progressing on these circuits." In Springtown and Williams township, as well as in the neighborhood of Mauch Chunk, the work extended and gained a solid footing this year. On Lancaster circuit, Turkey Hill, the society increased considerably, and in Adamstown the work of the Lord progressed finely. This year the first protracted meeting was held here by our ministers.

On Lake circuit in the State of New York, the work of grace progressed finely in general, but especially in Grove, Alleghany County, where a glorious revival took place, and the society increased considerably. In Sparta, Livingston County, they were blessed with a revival. When the Lord's Supper was celebrated there, Evangelicals, Lutherans, Methodists and Baptists, partook of the sacred emblems together, and there was a general union of the believers of all these denominations. Michael Lehn and Michael Sindlinger traveled the circuit. On Buffalo circuit, the number of believers also increased considerably, especially in Boston, Erie Co., where the membership was almost doubled.

On Canton and Columbiana circuits, in Ohio Conference, which had conjointly three preachers this year, under the charge of Elias Stoeve, conversions took place in different places, especially at Greensburg where the society increased considerably. Erie circuit prospered also, as well as Mansfield, Marion and some others. But in the absence of the necessary documents, we cannot say which parts enjoyed the most glorious outpourings of the Spirit of God.

Des Plaines circuit, in the State of Illinois, did admirably well this year. The Brethren Adam Stroh and Christian H. Lintner labored there with great success. The circuit extended from Chicago and Naperville, in Illinois, as far as ten miles north of Milwaukee, in Wisconsin.

This year Bro. Stroh also commenced to preach in the city of Milwaukee. In different places considerable awakenings took place, of which the most important were those near Wheeling in Illinois, and at Eckert's six miles south of Milwaukee. The one at Wheeling continued from Christmas almost all Winter, and about 50 souls were converted. The revival near Milwaukee took place principally during a protracted meeting in Bro. Fr. Eckert's barn, and the conversion of about 30 individuals, for the most part heads of families, was the glorious result. In Chicago also the brethren labored with great success. They generally preached in the City Hall, a large room in what was then the City Hotel, corner of Clark and Randolph streets, where the "Sherman House" stands at present. There were about 100 new members received during the year, and the whole membership was 186. Illinois mission numbered fifty members, seven of whom were received during this year.

#### § 223. Bishop Seybert's First Visit to Illinois and Wisconsin.

During this year Bishop Seybert paid his first visit to Illinois and Wisconsin; and the first camp-meeting of the Evangelical Association in the far West, as it was then called, and was also held this year on the land of Father Jacob Esher, two miles south-east of Wheeling, Cook County, Illinois, and 30 miles north-west of Chicago, beginning July 15th. There were 18 tents on the ground, which were crowded. Some of the friends had come from a distance of thirty miles on wagons drawn by oxen, through bad roads and deep waters; and others as far as 70 miles on foot. To all, except the preachers, camp-meetings were a novelty. Bishop Seybert superintended the meeting, and besides him the following preachers were present: Isaac Hoffert, Adam Stroh, and Christian H. Lintner. "That the meeting was highly blessed," says Bro. Esher in a report of it, "I need scarcely mention. God was not only feelingly, but even visibly present with his people; for one evening, when a heavy storm was gathering around the camp-ground, some profane persons present, exultingly predicted that now the meeting would be broken up; but lo! all at once the storm divided just in front of our camp, and while the rain fell in torrents on all sides, scarcely a drop fell on the camp-ground! Even the unconverted saw in this the finger of God, but his children praised Him with thankful hearts for this wonderful exhibition of His protecting power. Most of the witnesses of this event are still living, and can at any time confirm what I have just written."

The meeting was victorious from beginning to end, and crowned with awakenings and conversions. "Many," says Bishop Seybert, "passed from death unto life." At the quarterly conference held during this camp-meeting, also the first preacher of the "far West" was received on trial, namely, Bro. Christian Ebinger, one of our first converts in the West. Thus the first visit of the Bishop, the first camp-meeting of the Church,

and the first reception of a minister by it, in the West, took place here together.

By Bro. Seybert's visit, both the members and the preachers were greatly encouraged and strengthened; and the Bishop himself, having become fully acquainted with the importance and wants of the West, was ever after the warm friend and advocate of the same. Fully satisfied of the immense importance of the West, in a political and religious point of view, he exerted his whole influence to call the attention of the Church in its operations to the same. In the East he sometimes spoke so favorably of the West, that he was often charged with arousing and fostering the spirit of immigration to those beautiful prairies and flowery groves, to the injury of the East, as far as the Evangelical Association was concerned. But the Bishop's object evidently was, to promote the honor of God and the best interests of the Association. The emigration had already commenced, and increased every year. Hundreds of our members, often the greater part of classes and societies, and even preachers, emigrated to the West. Most of them improved their temporal affairs considerably; some gained both in a temporal and spiritual point of view; while others gained in temporal things only, but lost spiritually. The work had now gained a broad and solid basis in the West, and the prospects for the future were bright. From what has been said, it appears that the year under consideration was a highly blessed and fruitful one.

#### § 224. Building Churches.

The willingness of the members to build churches, which had been manifested for some years past, was still on the increase, especially in the eastern conferences. Churches were built in many places of the country, but especially in country towns, though also in some maritime cities. The difference between the churches that were built now, and those that had been built in former times, was also remarkable, both with regard to the external appearance of the buildings, and their internal arrangements and costs.

The first churches were small, low and plain, for the most part in remote corners, especially in towns, either on account of poverty of the members, or out of humility, the sincerity of which we would not question. The costs were generally from \$300 to \$500, and in some instances a little more. One story 12 or 15 feet high, an aisle through the middle, seats on both sides, a proportionably high pulpit, generally on one of the sides, no altar—this was the general style of the first churches. Those built in the next period, were somewhat larger, generally 30 by 40, or 40 by 45, a little higher, the pulpit lower, frequently two instead of one aisle, generally with an altar, and cost from six to seven hundred dollars, sometimes \$1,000.

At this time our people commenced to erect larger buildings, in some places of two stories, especially in towns, the costs varying from \$1500 to \$3000, in the large cities from \$6000 to \$7000, without the lot. There was, thanks be to God, no occasion till then for complaining of extravagance in the erection of churches in the Evangelical Association. But, though there was generally more done in this line than ever before, it was still rather necessary to encourage than to discourage the church-building spirit, or to warn against extravagance.\* Instead of seeking also in this respect, first the kingdom of heaven, many seek first to provide grand and convenient houses for themselves, contenting themselves with small, inconvenient and insignificant houses of worship, to the great injury of the good cause and their own disgrace. Such conduct is, undoubtedly, as displeasing in the sight of God as extravagance and pride in church edifices.

### § 225. Prosperity of the Publishing House.

The Publishing House was in a flourishing condition, and the book trade prospered beyond all expectation. The press was almost constantly in motion, and yet the demands for books could not all be met. The publication of the German pocket Bible, before alluded to, was completed this year, and one-half of the 3000 copies that were printed, were bound and sent off. But there being very few railroads in those days, the forwarding of books was rather inconvenient; the boxes had either to be sent hundreds of miles by private conveyance, or some person had to ship a number of them, to be distributed among the preachers. Especially books for the West had to be sent this way. In order to give the reader a correct idea of these things, we mention here an order for books, that was received this year, and the manner of forwarding them.

Bishop Seybert ordered for the different districts of the Ohio Conference, twenty-three thousand seven hundred and twenty-five books, with the intention to forward them to the West himself. At the close of his order he remarked: "You will probably think I have entirely overshot the mark, in ordering so many books; but, if you were as well acquainted with the scarcity of books in the West, as I am, you would judge differently." A great portion of these books consisted, of course, of little Sabbath-school books; yet their whole weight was 2500 pounds, and their cost, including a small quantity for Illinois, amounted to *four thousand, four hundred and six dollars, and twenty-five and one-half cents*. This was the heaviest order for books our House ever received, and the General Agent, Bro. Chas. Hammer, remarked: "Should such a large order be sent us again, we ought to have it a year before the books are wanted, in order to have time to get them ready." †

\*) The time has come, however, when the *watchmen* ought to be *wide awake* in this respect also.

†) It required a four horse team to forward these books 40 miles to the canal, whence they were shipped per boat.

The scarcity of German books in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa, was in those days so great that the *Christliche Botschafter* and the smaller hymn-book were used in some of the Sunday-schools to instruct the scholars.

### § 226. Concerning Education and Institutions of Learning.

As to liberal education and higher institutions of learning they were still too much underrated and neglected by many preachers and members, although some of them were learning to realize their importance. The time had evidently not yet arrived for the Association to establish higher institutions of learning; still, more might have been done in a general way for the promotion of science and general culture. The great abuse of learning in many Colleges and Universities, both in Europe and America, with its injurious results had filled some of the members with indifference and, indeed, with prejudices against such institutions, not considering that the abuse of a good cause never proves anything against the cause itself. But the increased book trade, the many good books, written by pious and learned men which came into the hands of preachers and members—in the distribution of which Bishop Seybert manifested special zeal and activity, the circulation of the *Christliche Botschafter*, and the spirit of the time, gradually diminished this indifference, and prejudices slowly but surely disappeared. As the Association was frequently charged with being as a body hostile to learning and higher schools, they were, at length, compelled to express themselves on the subject. The *Christliche Botschafter* then frequently contained articles which expressed the mind of the greater part of the Church on the subject.

There appeared in rapid succession communications under the captions: "I have no time for Study," "Education of the Clergy," "Science," etc., which produced considerable excitement with reference to this subject.

Excepting a brief article on *Culture of the Mind* in the 5th volume of the *Botschafter* the above named articles were the first of importance to appear in the Periodical on the subject of education, general scientific training, and mental culture. The subject was new in the Church, no one wrote about it, and no one recommended it publicly although many of the older preachers urged upon the younger brethren to read good books and acquire wholesome knowledge, etc. Really there was great hesitancy in dealing with the subject, partly because the preachers themselves were unlearned men, and partly for fear of giving offence in some directions. Many of the members had come from denominations, in whose ministers they had clearly seen that higher schools and an educated ministry without the unction of the Holy Spirit, are useless; and as they now felt far happier, after having been converted to God, under the guidance of even an unlearned ministry, and saw, on the whole more of the fear of God, more spiritual life and true Christianity than in their former Churches, it does not seem very strange

that they failed to apprehend adequately the advantages of sound learning in connection with true piety, and were even prejudiced against it. And as the ranks of the ministry were constantly supplied and increased from the laity, it was a matter of course that they brought some of these prejudices into the ministry. Moreover, a considerable portion of the membership and several of the ministers had come from the Mennonite and Dunkard denominations, whose ministers, as is well known, are unlearned. Under such circumstances no other sentiments on the subject of higher schools could be reasonably expected; and any movement designed to effect a change in this direction of higher education, as a matter of course, caused some apprehension, and encountered opposition. We may state, however, that many of the ministers and members had, by observation and reflection, become convinced of the advantages of a liberal education long before this time and were ready to aid in establishing institutions of learning, if they could have satisfied themselves that the time was ripe for the Evangelical Association to undertake such enterprises. But as the strongest friends of this cause did not consider the Church ripe for it, the matter was deferred to a more favorable time. It was deemed proper, however, at this juncture to begin the agitation of the subject, in order to hasten the wished for time, and to prepare the people for it. The above mentioned articles were the beginning of these preparatory labors; afterward more light was thrown upon the subject by freely discussing it, and when it came before the General Conference, the next year, it met with favor and was strongly supported.

The increase of members during the conference year amounted to 1514 and the whole membership numbered 10,506, the number of itinerants 104, local preachers 109. They were divided among the three Conferences as follows: East Pa., 3,439 members, 35 itinerants and 19 local preachers; West Pa., 3,429 members, 30 itinerants and 34 local preachers; Ohio, 3,638 members, 39 itinerants and 56 local preachers.

### § 227. Biographical Sketches.

During this conference year two preachers died.

Samuel Witt, of Somerset County, Pa., became a subject of converting grace about the year 1816, and joined the Evangelical Association. The Conference of 1818 received him as preacher into the itinerancy on probation, and appointed him as the junior colleague of Bro. Jacob Barber on Somerset circuit. The following year he was appointed to Bedford circuit, but at the next Conference he located on account of family affairs. Afterward he served as a respected and well beloved local preacher. At the special General Conference in 1836 he was ordained deacon, not having had as it would appear, an opportunity before, as the sessions of the Annual Conference were always held at a great distance from his residence. He was consumptive for a number of years, but died finally of bilious fever, in

the 53d year of his age. On his death-bed he was in great peace, and departed in full hope of eternal life.

Simeon Keil, of Wayne County, Ohio, died of consumption in his 23rd year. About four years previous he found the Lord, and was a faithful member of the Church from that time forth until his decease. In 1841 he was received into the itinerancy on probation by the Ohio Conference, and appointed the junior colleague of Jacob Frey on Pickaway circuit, but his health soon failing he had to leave the itinerant work. His disease became worse and he died before the close of the conference year, in the firm hope of a blissful immortality.

### § 228. A Still More Fruitful Year.

East Pennsylvania Conference held her session in 1842 at Allentown, Lehigh County, Pa., beginning March 2nd; West Pennsylvania at New Berlin again, beginning April 6th; and Ohio Conference in Walnut township, Pickaway County, Ohio, beginning May 11th. Nine ministers in all left the itinerancy, and 17 were received. The East Pennsylvania Conference formed a new circuit in the State of New York, called Jefferson circuit, and established a mission in the city of Rochester, N. Y., and another at Germantown, Pa.

West Pennsylvania Conference founded a mission at York, Pa., and a second in the County of Baltimore, Md., near and around Baltimore. Ohio Conference established two new missions in Illinois: Rock River and Mt. Carmel missions. In the East Pennsylvania Conference the preachers' salary was full again, but the two other Conferences fell considerably short.

This year was still more prosperous than the preceding one, and the increase of membership exceeded every former year. Each of the three Conferences received considerably more members this year, than in any previous one, and the work extended and increased extraordinarily. Never before had so many and extensive awakenings and conversions taken place, as this year. Not only in some places, but almost everywhere crowds of sinners were converted, and the believers encouraged and advanced. Some of the preachers stated that they had never witnessed the like before. On some of the circuits nearly all the classes received additions, and in many other places new classes were formed. The usual number of 30, 50, 70, or even 100 on a circuit or station, were far exceeded this year in most places. Some circuits reported as many as 150, 200, and even 250 new members. Some of the preachers remarked in their reports, that they could not give a particular report of the work of grace on their fields of labor, as it was general. People of every rank and age, old and young, rich and poor, moral and immoral, became the subjects of converting grace.

But not only in our Church, but also in every other denomination insisting on a Scriptural conversion, such frequent and great revivals took place; and this happened even in several denominations, where this had never been the case. Adam Ettinger, then a presiding elder of Zion district, in a short report of his district among other things makes the following remarks:—

“As to the work of God on my district, I would, indeed, send you a glowing report, but for want of time and opportunity, I cannot go into details. May it, therefore, suffice to say, as to the generality of awakenings and conversions, that I have never seen or heard anything similar to it before. Everything appears to be in commotion; wherever you turn your eyes, you see new and powerful revivals. Here in York, at Baltimore, and on the different circuits, scarcely a meeting is held, without more or less mourners coming forward to the altar, many of whom wrestle in prayer till they receive the blessing. Even in Churches, where only a few years ago everything was dark and gloomy, in which the cries of penitent sinners for mercy and the shouts of praise of the new converts, were rejected and despised as imbecility, exaggeration and fanaticism, you now see scores of persons coming to the ‘anxious bench,’ falling on their knees and crying to God for mercy; and where they are not frightened and intimidated by the soul-murdering cries of ‘order, order’,—there—astonishing—even in the strange land, the praise of the Lord is heard here and there. But, alas! only too soon the harps are again hung on the willows.”

In a report from John C. Reisner and his two colleagues, Jacob Dereich and Philip Schulle, of Lancaster circuit, East Pa. Conference, the following remarks are made:—

“On the whole, we are doing exceedingly well on this circuit. There is no class that has not received additions, and some classes consist of new members altogether. More than 200 persons have found peace with God during this conference year, and over 150 have joined our Church. And had we been able to hold all the general meetings that were desired by the friends, the number would have been much larger. On Turkey Hill about seventy persons are said to have found peace during two weeks. Yes, the Lord works so powerfully, as has never been witnessed here before. Persons were wrought upon by the grace of God, both in their houses and in the streets; and a certain man is said to have found his Saviour while in a well, sixty feet under the surface of the ground! Hallelujah!”

Reporting from York circuit, West Pennsylvania Conference, the Brethren Henry Thomas and J. Etger, among other things, remarked as follows:—

“During the last few months more souls have been converted to God than we have ever seen or heard of before in so short a time. The houses

are too small, the nights (it was in the midst of Winter) too short, and our strength is entirely inadequate to the labors which the mourners require. Some of the friends are exhausted by their incessant labors, while others have laid their secular business almost entirely aside, in order to labor exclusively for the salvation of their fellow-men."

In his report of Cumberland circuit, Bro. Jacob Boas states:—

"Of a truth the Lord has this year visited old Cumberland circuit with the outpouring of His Spirit. \* \* \* Parents and their children, young men and young women, rich and poor, have given their hearts to the God of all mercies, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. \* \* \* More than 200 new converts have joined our Church during this year."

During a meeting in Kutz's Church, three miles east of Carlisle, which lasted four weeks, between 50 and 60 persons are said to have been converted, 48 of whom have joined our Church. There was a meeting near Mount Rock that continued 16 days, and resulted in the conversion of 30 persons, 28 of whom united with us. During a seven day meeting, in a school-house in the Pines, near Shippensburg, between thirty and forty persons found peace with God, and thirty-two of them united with us. In Fishing Creek Valley, Perry County, and in several other places of that circuit, glorious conversions have also taken place. These are some specimens of the heart-refreshing reports of the brethren during this year.

In East Pennsylvania Conference, most of the other circuits as well as Lancaster circuit just mentioned, were blessed with glorious revivals. On Lebanon circuit, in Fishing Creek Valley, Dauphin County, a considerable awakening took place during this year; also in Millerstown again, Lebanon County, where about sixty are said to have found peace; and in Lebanon, (so wrote Bro. Jacob Saylor,) a large number have been converted to God.

On Schuylkill circuit the labors of the brethren Daniel Berger and Solomon Neitz were likewise abundantly blessed. At Schuylkill Haven about sixty persons were converted during a protracted meeting at Pine Grove 30, and at Orwigsburg about 20. On the whole, there were 119 members received during the year on this circuit. On Leikens circuit the Brethren John Sensel and George T. Hains labored, and the work of the Lord extended farther and farther. At Millersburg a glorious revival took place. Bro. Henry Bucks reported, that the work progressed finely in Pottsville, and the society there was in a flourishing condition. In Philadelphia Bro. Michael F. Maize's labors were greatly blessed. The new mission in Germantown and neighborhood, where Bro. Joseph M. Saylor was stationed, succeeded remarkably well, and the society resolved the first year to build a church, which resolution was also carried out the sec-

ond year. The circuits of Mohawk, Lake and Buffalo, in the State of New York, numbered many converts, especially the former two.

In the West Pa. Conference the work was, with very few exceptions, a general one. Glorious awakenings took place on Columbia circuit, situated then for the most part in Union County. In New Columbia between 30 and 40 were converted, and arrangements were then made to build a church. A meeting of nine days was held in the house of J. Rohland, in Buffalo Valley, and nearly 40 persons were converted, 30 of whom joined the Church. The work progressed also in other places on the circuit. The preacher in charge, Bro. George Schaefer, wrote at the close of his report thus: "I can truly say, that this year the Lord has done great things for us, as from 100 to 150 persons have become the happy subjects of redeeming grace."

Lycoming circuit, in charge of the brethren Alexander Longsdorf and Simon M'Lehn, was in a most flourishing condition, and was blessed during the year with many awakenings and conversions, especially in Nittany Valley. During a protracted meeting there, about 70 persons are said to have found peace. Also in Sugar Valley and in many other places, large numbers were converted. There were 147 new members received during the year. In Millheim, on Center circuit, a glorious revival took place at the dedication of the new church. Henry Rohland and Aaron Wolf labored on Union circuit, and their labors were crowned with more than ordinary success; nor was New Berlin an exception to the general rule, about thirty souls were converted to God, and the society was powerfully revived and strengthened.

In the town of York, Pa., where the year before a spacious, convenient and fine looking church had been built, but alas! not paid for; and where a mission had been established by the previous Conference, a considerable awakening took place this and the following year under the charge of George Brickley. When the mission was being established, there were 12 members there, and after the lapse of two years the society numbered more than 100 members. After this, the mission was changed into a station, and seemed to do tolerably well for some time.

Baltimore County mission, where Levi Eberhart was stationed, did remarkably well the first year, and at its close numbered nearly 100 members. Also at Jarrettsville, Md., a glorious work was commenced this year, a considerable society was gathered, and afterward a church built. There was likewise a good beginning made in Whiteground, west of Baltimore, and subsequently a church built there. The missionary had found still more openings near Baltimore; but the following year the mission was changed into a circuit in charge of Moses M'Lehn, when it began to stagnate and go backward. Afterwards the circuit was dropped altogether, but finally taken up again.

The Baltimore society was this and the following year in charge of

Bro. Charles Hammer, and gained in point of solidity and strength, but not much in numbers.

In Virginia, where the sainted Moses Bower labored, several important awakenings took place, one of them in Quaker Hollow, and another in Black Creek Valley. This circuit that had lain fallow for a number of years, now began to recover and bring forth abundant fruit. George Dellinger reported of Gettysburg circuit, that the Lord had commenced a glorious work near Baalhill ; a considerable number were converted, and a class of 27 members formed. Also at Warren the work made glorious progress.

In the Ohio Conference the increase of membership was not as large as in either of the other two Conferences, yet larger than ever before. Many conversions took place on Wayne circuit, in charge of Elias Stoever, especially at a protracted meeting in the house of John Bender, in Wayne Co. Bro. Stoever wrote of it : " This was one of the most blessed meetings that we have attended for a long time. The cries for mercy and the shouts of victory were heard at a great distance. Here 34 new converts joined the Church. We are, however, confidently looking for a still richer harvest, as the prospects on this circuit are very promising."

On Canton circuit the work of God prospered greatly, and brought forth much fruit, especially at Greensburg, where another great revival took place. Bro. Long, preacher in charge of the circuit, wrote in one of his reports thus : " During this meeting from 25 to 30 penitents came to the altar at every invitation, and many of them found peace." He further remarked : " About two miles south of this place, where about eight years ago a small number of our people were ruined by Mormonism, a new class can now be formed again. These unhappy persons lost, through that imposition, not only the correct knowledge of God and his word, which they had acquired, but also their property, and some even their lives ; for, after they had come to Nauvoo, their former class-leader, B., was shot by a mob, and, with three others, buried in a well." On this circuit the largest camp-meeting, at least in point of the number of tents, that had at that time ever been heard of in the Evangelical Association, was held during this year, on the land of J. Rau ; the number of tents was 56. In a report of his circuit, John J. Kopp wrote of this camp-meeting : " It was blessed with awakenings, conversions, and a general revival of religion, from beginning to end. The exercises were continued without interruption from 8 o'clock of Monday morning till Tuesday morning. During the last night of the meeting between 30 and 40 penitents cried for mercy at the altar, most of whom were also pardoned."

Glorious awakenings likewise took place on Lake circuit, in charge of Peter Getz ; a meeting near Vermillion Furnace was especially richly blessed and resulted in the conversion of a large number of souls. Another glorious work of grace broke out in the north-eastern corner of Seneca County,

Ohio, which resulted in the formation of a fine class there during the year. Bro. Getz wrote at the close of one of his reports: "I can say to the praise of God, that, upon the whole, we are doing well on this circuit. There appears to be a great excitement among the people on the subject of religion. Protracted meetings are being held by different denominations, which are protracted not only for weeks, but even for months, and hundreds of souls are said to be converted. I am at times of opinion, that by Miller's prediction of the nearness of the second advent of Christ, about which a great deal ado is made in this part of country, some men are saved through fear." The circuits of Lancaster, Pickaway, Sandusky, Crawford, Mansfield, Bristol and Columbiana, fared as usual. We have no reports of extraordinary works of grace there during the year.

In the States of Indiana and Illinois, the fields of labor of the brethren extended more and more, although the increase of membership was but small in most places during the year. Mount Carmel mission, however, made an exception; it had been established by the last Conference, did admirably well the first year, and at its close numbered nearly 100 members. As had been done on Waterloo mission in Canada, so the brethren did here, *i. e.*, they held a camp-meeting the first year, namely on the land of P. Dundor, who had emigrated to the West as a member of the Society. It consisted of 13 tents and was richly blessed, although the missionary, Bro. Christopher Augenstein, had no help in the pulpit, but a local preacher and an exhorter. The following year, Christian Lintner and Andrew Nicolai were sent there, and the following year Bro. Nicolai and George G. Platz. The mission continued to extend, and in 1845 its western part was converted into a circuit, called Mount Carmel circuit, while the eastern part, situated in the State of Indiana, was continued as Dubois mission, and also brought forth abundant fruit.

The former Illinois mission was now called Rock River mission, in charge of Lewis Heiss. On Des Plaines circuit, served by Frederick Wahl and George A. Blank, a second richly blessed camp-meeting was held this year on the same spot, where one had been held the year before. It would seem, however, that the circuit neither increased nor extended much during the year.

From what has been said, it is evident that Ohio Conference had for the last few years extended its borders remarkably, and was in a highly flourishing condition.

The extraordinary revivals of religion and many conversions that took place in the years of 1842 and 1843, in the different Churches of the country, seem to have been, to some extent at least, the effects of extraordinary causes, some of which may have been the following:

1.—The hard times, caused by the complete prostration of commerce and the great scarcity of money all over the country, in consequence of which thousands became bankrupt, and tens of thousands were thrown out

of employment, whereby many were reduced to abject poverty and even to want.

2.—The prophecy of the Baptist preacher Miller, which was promulgated by himself and his followers with the greatest boldness all over the country, that the second advent of Christ would speedily take place. The former of these two causes dampened the reigning spirit of worldliness and speculation to a great extent, and thus made room for serious thoughts on the subject of religion with many; the second, by working on the principle of fear, may have induced many to seek the salvation of their souls. But the final consequences of this excitement were of a disastrous nature; Millerism, as a matter of course, falling into disrepute and contempt, its adherents were greatly perplexed; some became skeptics and infidels, and vast numbers of those who had been induced, at least in part to reform their lives, by means of this new and greatly exciting doctrine, relapsed into the service of sin and Satan. The general excitement caused by Millerism, was followed by an almost equally general indifference and apathy of most of the Churches, a consequence which, alas! the Evangelical Association also shared, at least in some places.

The increase during this year was 2,519, and the whole membership amounted to 13,025. The increase within the East Pa. Conference was 933, in the West Pa. Conference 1,007, and the Ohio Conference 579. The number of newly received members was, however, much larger, viz., in East Pennsylvania 1,361, West Pennsylvania 1,384, and Ohio 850—altogether 3,595.

#### § 229. A Trying Time for the Publishing House.

Our Publishing House also was affected by the great financial crisis in the country. The German pocket Bible, the cost of which amounted to about \$5000, became ready for delivery at that time; but as many of the subscribers were not prepared to make immediate payment, and as some of the other dues to the House were not paid, no dividend could be made at the close of the year for the several conferences.

The stewardship of the House also passed into other hands at the opening of this conference year. Charles Hammer, who had filled that post for three years, resigned his office, and Thomas Buck was elected his successor. Thus Bro. Buck entered upon the duties of his office while the House was in rather critical and unpleasant circumstances, which greatly discouraged him. Like all others who never before had the office, so he found the duties of his new post far more onerous and difficult than he had imagined, and soon regretted having accepted it. The prospects of the House appeared to him rather gloomy, and he entertained strong doubts as to its future prosperity. These apprehensions, however, were owing to his want of acquaintance with the true state of things, and the business routine of the House; real causes for them there were none, as the sequel proved.

But Bro. Buck's cares and difficulties as General Agent were of but short duration. In May, 1842, he entered upon the duties of his new post, and on the 26th of October following he died. The stewardship was then given to William W. Orwig for the second time, which he held, together with the editorship of the paper until the session of the next General Conference, in the Fall of 1843. The general financial difficulties of the country, and the want of proper arrangements and experience in collecting the moneys due for the Paper and books, were the real causes of the embarrassment of the House; but they soon changed for the better, and at the close of the following year a dividend of \$1200 could be distributed among the several Conferences. Touching these difficulties of the House, the last number of Volume VI. of the *Botschafter* contains the following remarks:—

“This has indeed been a year of trial for the *Botschafter* and our Publishing House generally. For we have not only had to struggle against great difficulties, arising out of the financial crisis of the country, which involved us in heavy losses; but death also appeared in our midst, and called one of our number from time into eternity. Yet we do not wish to murmur against Providence, but rather hope that everything will work for our best interests. We have, after all, great reason to thank God, the wise and gracious Ruler of all things, for the prosperity and success, which our House has been permitted to enjoy from its very start, five years ago, to this hour. The business capital has increased tenfold, and more than \$3000 have been divided among the several conferences.”

### § 230. Biographical Sketches.

This year the Association again lost four of its ministers by death, all of whom had been useful men, some eminently so. The deceased were: Thomas Buck, Adam Stroh, John Schaefer, and Abraham Frey. All of these brethren were, with the exception of Bro. Buck, in the prime of life, and might have served the Church many more years. But thus far only comparatively few of our itinerants have attained to old age—most of them who have died, departed as young men and in the prime of life, yea, many of them in the very first years of their itinerancy. Others who indeed lived longer, generally impaired their health for life in the same period of their ministerial calling. The causes of these disastrous consequences were various; irregularity with regard to diet and lodging; the frequent change of climate; exposure to every kind of weather; and the fatigues of difficult journeys and almost daily preaching, to which our itinerants were then more subjected than at present. For a man who is not accustomed to a life of such hardships, and in the absence of necessary instruction and care, to get along for any length of time without ruining his health or even losing his life, before his constitution became hardened, is almost a miracle. In this way the itinerancy of the Society formerly lost many of its most prom-

ising men in their prime of life, and still meets with more or less similar losses.

Of the exact time and circumstances of Bro. Buck's conversion and calling to the ministry, nothing in particular is known. Bro. Buck was one of the most influential men of the Association of his time, and ranked as high as George Miller, John Dreisbach and Henry Niebel of former days, and John Seybert, Joseph Long and others of later days. In penetration, resolution and energy, he was inferior to none; superior, perhaps, to most of them. He was of a highly choleric temper, stern gravity, had an uncommonly sharp sparkling eye, a penetrating look, and was rather reserved in ordinary conversation, and his whole appearance commanded reverence and respect; bashful and timid persons were rather afraid of him, especially when he found it necessary to examine or censure them. At times he was very reserved, then again very sociable and affable, and in his conversation with those who enjoyed his confidence, very frank. But woe to those in whom he placed no confidence; in that case his remarks were often too harsh and even insulting. But whenever he learned that his judgment was wrong, or that he had treated any one with too great severity, he hastened to heal the wound in some way or other, or to render satisfaction.

His sermons were generally pointed, powerful and overwhelming, especially in his younger years. His favorite subjects were: the word and the commandments of God, faith, freedom from sin, and perfect holiness of heart and life. His discourses were for the most part, and often almost altogether, argumentative; and at times he became highly excited and severe. He generally drew the attention of his hearers, and but rarely failed to make a deep impression on them. Gainsayers were often filled with anger while he preached, and left abruptly, as many of old did, when our Saviour preached; others again were powerfully shaken and humbled. He was fitted in an eminent degree to preach to professors of religion. Watching and praying, growing in grace, unfeigned brotherly love, the duties in the family, plain dress and a simple mode of living, liberality, and above all, holiness or Christian perfection, were generally the subjects of these discourses. But he belonged not to the number of those who believe that the Christian is fully sanctified simultaneously with being justified, but he preached the necessity of a further cleansing from indwelling sin, without which no one can see the Lord.

For the confirmation of what we have just said of his views on this most important subject, we here quote a paragraph from one of his reports of his district, which he wrote about eleven months prior to his death; it is as follows:—

“Pleasing as it is to see, that sinners are converted and to extend the hand of fellowship to the children of God, in order to travel with them to the heavenly Canaan; so lamentable it is, that Christians so rare-

ly seek and obtain the sanctification of their souls. On reading the lives of preachers of former days, especially those of John Nelson and Benjamin Abbott, one is almost ashamed and led to believe, that in our days neither preachers nor members follow holiness, as they ought to do."

Whoever is but partially acquainted with the literature of the Methodists, knows that Nelson and Abbott fully agreed with Wesley and the first Methodist preachers generally, on the doctrine concerning holiness. The same view was held by Bro. Buck, and, in fact, by all the preachers of the Evangelical Association in his time.

In enforcing the Discipline, Bro. Buck was very strict, and, in the opinion of some, too severe. He but seldom showed favor to transgressors, especially if they were preachers; and as his influence in the Conference was great, he was much feared by those who sometimes took wrong steps, or were carried away by levity. He was possessed of an extensive knowledge of human nature, yet sometimes mistook persons, at first acquaintance with them, and thus was in danger of passing an unfavorable judgment—he scarcely ever overrated persons. Unsteady, noisy persons, conducting themselves improperly during divine service, were sometimes sharply reproved by him in public; but lively, powerful services, conducted in the spirit, he advocated to the utmost of his power.

With regard to cleanliness in every point of view, he had but few equals. His person, his dress, everything on and around him, had to be clean. But he preached cleanliness not only by his example, but often inculcated it in private, and even in public, as necessary to godliness. Cleanliness, order and punctuality, were three prominent traits of his character, which he also recommended to the preachers under him, and to all with whom he came in contact. Wherever he lodged, he left everything in the very best order, so as to save the family the trouble to clean or sweep after he had gone. In short, he was courteous, and knew how to conduct himself in any place. In his religious private duties, such as praying, reading, studying, fasting, etc., he was very exact and scrupulous; as long as his health and strength permitted him to do so, he fasted regularly.

From his time of serving as presiding elder to the election of a Bishop, he was elected chairman of his Annual Conference nearly every time, and he was also eminently fitted for that office. His love of order, vigilant eye, strong judgment, his commanding appearance and conduct, and his peculiar business tact, entitled him to that dignity before many others. His decisions touching questions of discipline were almost always acquiesced in. In conducting camp and other large meetings, he had but few equals.

Bro. Buck was received into the itinerancy on trial by the Annual Conference of 1823, convened at Strassburg, York Co., Pa., and appointed

the colleague of John Dehoff on Somerset circuit. He was at that time a widower, and already over 30 years of age. At first he is said to have been but a weak preacher, but improved rapidly. In 1824 he and Conrad Kring became the colleagues of Philip Wagner on the circuits of Union and Center. In 1825 he was ordained deacon, and appointed preacher in charge of Lancaster circuit, Pa.; in 1826 he traveled on Schuylkill, and 1827 on York circuit.

In 1828 he was elected presiding elder, and stationed on Salem district, consisting of the circuits of Union, Center, Somerset and Lake, the latter in the State of New York. The next year he was transferred to Canaan district, consisting of the circuits of Schuylkill, Lebanon, Lancaster, York, Franklin and Berkley, the latter in Virginia, and served two years there; in 1831 he was transferred to Zion district, consisting of the circuits of York, Franklin, Berkley and Somerset; and after two years he was re-transferred to Canaan district, but served there only one year; for he married again during this year, and located at the next session of Conference, on account of family circumstances, after having served the Church five years as a circuit preacher and six years as presiding elder.

In 1837, three years after his location, he re-entered the itinerancy and was stationed on Schuylkill circuit. The year following he was re-elected presiding elder, and stationed on Canaan district, where he served three years up to the Spring of 1842. Thus his itinerancy lasted 15 years. The General Conference of 1839, in Center County, Pa., elected him its chairman, and in 1842, when he could not take another appointment on account of bodily infirmities, his conference retained him in the itinerancy, and gave him permission to travel and preach according to his convenience. Soon after he attended the session of West Pennsylvania Conference, beginning April 6th at New Berlin, and was, as already stated, elected General Agent of the Publishing House.

In May following he removed with his family from Millersburg, Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, to New Berlin, and entered upon the duties of his office in high spirits; but finding more trouble and greater difficulties in the discharge of his new duties than he had imagined, his health which had been poor before, declined fast. He, however, did not complain much, but endeavored to fill his post as well as he possibly could, till on the 9th of Oct. following he was seized by severe cramps in the stomach, which caused an inflammation of the bowels, and after severe suffering, terminated his earthly career, October 26th. Bro. Buck spoke but little during his sickness, and said nothing about his spiritual condition—probably because no one had asked him about it—and he died, as it were, unexpectedly. He was, as above stated, rather taciturn, especially so when he was unwell, or where he was not intimately acquainted. This and his severe sufferings, as well as his extreme weakness and the heavy doses of

stupefying medicines, that were administered to him, were doubtless the causes why he did not speak more during his sickness of his faith and trust in God ; yet his tranquillity of mind, his entire freedom from any fear of death, and his whole conduct, proved abundantly that all was right with him. Thus died, in the firm hope of eternal life, and in the 53rd year of his life, one of the most efficient, and, in some respects, most useful preachers of the Evangelical Association, whose memory ought never to be forgotten.

Adam Stroh was a vigorous and promising young preacher, talented, industrious, active, and very successful in his ministerial labors, but died at the early age of 25 years, 7 months and 17 days ! About 8½ years before his death, he was converted, when Bro. Buck traveled Wooster circuit in Ohio Conference. About two years after he felt himself called to the Gospel ministry, but waited almost a whole year before he obeyed this call. After he had traveled with Bro. Daniel N. Long about five months on Bristol circuit, Ohio, he attended the Conference for the first time, was received on trial, and stationed with George Dressel on Canton circuit. In 1840, while yet a probationer, he was appointed preacher in charge of Lake circuit, Ohio, with John Hall for his colleague. This year he was led by an inward feeling to seek entrance in the city of Cleveland, for preaching the Gospel there ; he made the attempt, and succeeded in a rather extraordinary manner, as already stated.

In 1841 he was ordained deacon, and appointed preacher in charge of Des Plaines circuit, in Illinois, with Christian Lintner for his colleague ; his labors there met the approbation of the people, and were crowned with success. Referring to his farewell sermon there, before a very large and solemn audience, in the Spring of 1842, Bro. John J. Esher writes thus, among other things : “ Bro. Adam Stroh’s valedictory discourse, which he delivered here, from Acts 20, 32 : ‘And now, brethren, I commend you to God,’ etc., will never be forgotten by most of those who heard it. As if both the preacher and his audience had been aware, that this young and excellent watchman in Israel would so speedily be called from the walls of Zion, a preternatural, heavenly solemnity prevailed the whole assembly.” Ohio Conference, held in May, 1842, appointed him preacher in charge of White Water mission in the State of Indiana, with Franklin R. Tobias for his colleague. But here his health failed. His biographer, Nicholas Gehr, writes :

“ He had scarcely labored four months on his new field of labor, and become acquainted with his people, when he was seized by a violent fever, which terminated his ministerial career and laid the foundation of a fatal disease. When the fever had apparently left him, the malady took another turn, passing into consumption, as his physician said. In this state of health he returned with his wife to his and her parents, and with the latter spent the greater part of the remainder of his life. I visited him and

conversed with him. He expected to recover, and others who saw him, entertained the same opinion. But what are our earthly hopes! How short, how uncertain is our life! The work of the fell destroyer progressed rapidly, his vital spirits fled, and soon —almost unexpectedly, his immortal spirit left its tenement of clay."

During his disease he looked forward, with composure and calmness, to the day of his departure, and left this world in the enjoyment of that hope which maketh not ashamed. He died April 2d, 1843, in Green township, Summit County, Ohio, leaving his parents, brothers and sisters, and an afflicted widow with whom he had lived but 10 months in the bonds of matrimony. Thus a young and useful laborer in the vineyard of the Lord finished his earthly career, whose services were still so much needed by the Church. Why did he die so soon? This question eternity will probably answer. His remains were buried in the grave-yard of the Evangelical Association near Greensburg, and Bro. Elias Stoever preached his funeral sermon from 2. Tim. 4 : 7, 8.

John Schaefer died March 8th, 1843, at Erie, Erie township, Pa., in the 27th year of his age. The minutes of the Ohio Conference show that he was received by that body into the itinerancy on trial in 1840, and appointed the colleague of Bro. Jacob Frey on Bristol circuit. The following year he traveled with Peter Getz on Erie circuit. At the Conference of 1842 he was ordained deacon, and located on account of bodily infirmities. He consequently served but two years as an itinerant, and suffered much during the greater part of this period, on account of his shattered health. He impaired his health the very first Winter of his ministerial career, by preaching while he had a severe cold; in this way, as is supposed, he became consumptive, of which disease he died. He was useful in the Lord's vineyard. On his death-bed he was composed and full of hope of eternal life. Bro. Abraham Niebel preached his funeral sermon, from Phil. 1, 21 : "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Abraham Frey, a resident of Richland County, Ohio, died of fever, January 29, 1843, in the 33d year of his age. He was brought up in Union County, Pa., and was converted there about 1830. In 1832 he was received by the Eastern Conference into the itinerancy on trial, and appointed the colleague of Elias Stoever on Indiana circuit; the next year he became the colleague of Daniel Brickley on Somerset circuit; the third year that of Charles Hesser on Cumberland circuit; and the fourth year he traveled with John Lutz and George Seger again on Somerset circuit. At the close of the third year he was ordained deacon. Subsequently he traveled yet two years in the Western Conference, and served the remainder of his life in the capacity of a local preacher. He was not a very gifted orator, yet labored with success. On his death-bed he expressed the full assurance of being a child of God, and died in this happy frame of mind.

**§ 231. The Eighth General Conference—1843.**

This was the first General Conference consisting of regularly elected delegates ; it was also the best attended of any that had been held in the Evangelical Association and transacted the largest amount of business. It convened at Greensburg, Summit County, Ohio, and held its session in the Ev. Church of that place, lasting from October 23rd to November 2nd—11 days.

There are several peculiar facts connected with the appointing of time and place for this Conference session, and as these facts cast considerable light upon the views and practice of the fathers with regard to the position of the then existing three Annual Conferences, and as they also constitute an important item in history, we insert the statement thereof, as follows :

The General Conference of 1839 appointed the time and place of its next session by the following resolution :—

*“Resolved, That the next General Conference shall be held on Tabor district in the Ohio Conference district, beginning with the first Monday in November, 1843.”*

Thus it remained until the session of the West Pa. Conference, April 5th, 1843, which passed the following resolution without note or comment :

*“Resolved, That the General Conference shall commence on Wednesday, the 23rd of October, instead of the first week in November.”* Thus this annual Conference changed the time, appointed by General Conference itself, by a simple resolution. The Ohio Conference which convened on the 10th of May, adopted and recorded the following resolution :—

*“Resolved, That the General Conference shall be held on Canton circuit in the Evangelical meeting-house at Greensburg, commencing with the 23rd of October this year.”* There is no trace to be found in the record of the East Pennsylvania Conference of any transaction concerning this matter.

Thus the West Pa. Conference changed the time for the session of General Conference in the coming Autumn, and the Ohio Conference coincided with that change and also appointed the place. General Conference had named Tabor district which was several hundred miles in extent, in several directions, and the Ohio Conference appointed the Ev. church at Greensburg on Canton circuit. The East Pa. Conference took no part in these proceedings. There is no reason given anywhere for the transactions of said two Conferences, and yet there must have been sufficient reasons existing, for we find that the General Conference assembled upon the time and at the place as fixed by these Conferences, without raising any objection whatever.

The question here arises : Was such a procedure legal ? It would seem that General Conference itself had no doubt of its legality, for it practically ratified it by an obedient acquiescence in the resolutions of these two Conferences without saying a word against them.

An attempt has been made to show the legality in the following manner: Since 1817 there had been a sentence in the Discipline reading thus: "Time and place of the General Conference shall be appointed by the bishop with the consent of the majority of the Conference, but if there be no bishop present, then the oldest Conference district shall do it through its Annual Conference." But since 1839 there existed no oldest conference district nor oldest conference. The three conferences are historically of equal age, as has already been shown, but here two of these oldest conferences agreed as regards the change of time, and these two were a majority of the three. But then this does not remove the chief difficulties *i. e.* that there was a bishop present, and that General Conference had already fixed the time for the next session.

In consideration of these transactions the fact becomes the more remarkable that these two annual Conferences did these things without the East Pa. Conference and neither that Conference nor the General Conference objected. Practically it is a commentary which shows conclusively that neither any annual Conference nor the General Conference at that time regarded the East Pa. Conference as the "oldest conference", having the special prerogative, which the old Eastern Conference exercised, in calling and appointing time and place for General Conferences. It shows also how strong was the bond of brotherly love and confidence, and also the strong practical bent of the fathers. It is a very interesting item of our history. In addition to this, it should be said that the surviving members of the General Conference of 1839 and 1843, say that the three new conferences, created in 1839, were placed on equal footing in all respects.

Bishop Seybert opened the session by devotional exercises and then appointed Absalom B. Schaefer as secretary, who then appointed Henry Fischer and Charles Hammer as assistants. After the organization was completed and the examination of the delegates finished, it was unanimously,

*Resolved*, That out of respect for Bro. Charles Hesser, who died on his way to Conference by an accident, no business be transacted on the following Wednesday afternoon, and that the bishop shall preach the funeral sermon of the deceased.

This resolution was carried out and great solemnity and deep sadness characterized the exercises. The news of Bro. Hesser's death received on the day before the opening of the Conference, filled the delegates with grief and caused many tears, especially with those who had been closely associated with him and hence felt the loss more deeply.

After many initiatory transactions Conference took up its regular business. The amendments to the discipline recommended by the annual conferences were generally adopted. They were chiefly: An amendment of the section defining the power of General Conference, of the rules for the admission of preachers, additions to the duties of classleaders and local preachers, etc.

The "Temporal Economy" was changed as follows :

The salary of a single preacher was raised from \$60 to \$100, and that of a married one from \$105 to \$200, with \$25 for every child under 14 years, besides reasonable traveling expenses; the salary of the officers of the Printing Establishment was increased by \$50 each; better arrangements were made for the support of superannuated poor itinerants and their families, and many new rules were introduced into the Publishing House.

The Annual Conferences, it was resolved, shall for the future be independent of each other, with regard to the support of the preachers. Thus far all the preachers of the different conferences had received the same salary; as in former years the conference that had collected the largest contributions, had to assist those which had fallen short; and in the years immediately preceding this conference, these short coming conferences had drawn the more from the "Chartered Fund" and the proceeds of the Book Establishment. But after this, each conference had, in this respect, to take care of itself.

These were important and necessary changes, which contributed largely toward the improvement of the itinerancy.\*

Another very important action of this body was its resolution that the Association shall hereafter pay more attention to the English portion of our population, endeavoring to preach the Gospel unto them, and to labor for their spiritual interests; as well as that it shall be lawful to form English conferences, and to publish an English paper as soon as practicable. It was also resolved to enlarge our English hymn-book. This was very encouraging to the English portion of our preachers and members, and

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\* Since 1839 the 3 annual conferences were practically independent of each other with regard to the salaries of the preachers. The financial dependency of the former Western Conference upon the Eastern Conference ceased with the dissolution of those two conferences and the formation of the three new conferences out of their territory and membership. The East Pa. Conference distributed its surplus among her own preachers, and the other two conferences drew from the profits of the Publishing House to make up deficits in salary. This latter transaction was then ratified by this General Conference in the following manner, as the record shows: "Moved by Henry Bucks and seconded by Jacob Boas, that the deficits of the preachers for the last two years in the Ohio and West Pennsylvania Conferences shall be supplied from the profits of the Publishing House and the interest from the Charitable Fund." (Gen. Conf. Record, p. 266.)

Thereupon the matter of finances of the conferences for the future with reference to the dividends from the Publishing House and the interest from the Charitable Fund was regulated by the following resolution: "Moved by Charles Hammer and seconded by George Brickley, and adopted by Conference, that the interest from the Charitable Fund and the profits from the Publishing House shall be divided equally among the different annual conferences, and that each annual conference shall provide for its own preachers, both itinerant and superannuated, with their families or widows and orphans." (p. 266.) This provision is essentially still in force. (1893.)

contributed, as a matter of course, toward the more rapid increase of the same. It was especially the West Pennsylvania Conference, which progressed more rapidly from that time, and in a few years it exceeded all other conferences in membership.

But it was by no means the intention of General Conference, that the German population should be neglected ; it was, on the contrary, its firm conviction, that the Evangelical Association was called of God to take care of the Germans of this country, who were so grossly neglected by so many Churches of this country.

This Conference ventured also, to express its views on the literary qualifications of the clergy, to recommend learning highly to all ministers and candidates for the ministry within its connection, and to lay down a plan of studies for our young preachers. This was a strong move in a cause that had been neglected too long—not, indeed, from indifference, much less from contempt, but rather from the conviction that it was still too early for the Evangelical Association, to establish higher institutions of learning, numbering as yet but thirteen thousand members, and from fear of giving offence to some of our members and preachers, who, for reasons already given, underrated literary qualifications in the ministry too much. The latter looked upon the establishment of higher schools of learning as a dangerous innovation, full of mischief ; yet their motives were, probably, as pure as those of the others who wished that the time might soon arrive to establish such institutions. Referring to this subject, the *Botschafter*, soon after the adjournment of Conference, contained the following remarks :—

“ Not one word was said about the establishment of a higher school of learning or college, which some seem to apprehend so very much. We doubt, whether a single member of General Conference expected that something would be done by that body in this matter, as everyone could easily satisfy himself that the proper time for us has not yet come.” Four years after there was, indeed, an attempt made, but failed, as was to be expected. Yet this step was by no means in vain, as the subject was thereby kept before the people and discussed.

### § 232. Declaration of General Conference concerning Erudition of the Ministry.

The manifesto of the General Conference on this subject was as follows :—

“As the Evangelical Association is charged by many, though unjustly, with looking upon learning, or rather a classical education of the ministry, as altogether superfluous and useless, yea even as dangerous and injurious, and despising, for this reason, all higher institutions of learning ; this Conference feels itself called upon and under obligation, to declare and

express its views on this subject in public, and to repel thereby this false charge.

"It is indeed true, that this Conference believes and teaches, that all human wisdom, learning and knowledge, without a divine call and the unction of the Spirit, qualify no man for the Gospel ministry; and that a man, called of God to this office, and filled with the Holy Ghost and with power from on high, without great human learning, or as a comparatively illiterate man, can be a preacher of the Gospel and accomplish much good, if he fears God and is conscientious in the discharge of his duties. But notwithstanding this, the Conference acknowledges and maintains, that learning in the common acceptation of the term, or a classical education, is in many respects of great advantage to a man who is called of God to the Gospel ministry, and endowed with the Holy Ghost, and enhances his usefulness; or in other words, that he who has the divine unction, and great learning, can, in many instances, and even generally, accomplish far more in the vineyard of the Lord, and toward the conversion of the world and the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom, than the unlearned man, though he may possess the same measure of divine unction and grace.

"Entertaining these views of the advantages of learning in a minister of the Gospel, this Conference recommends to all its candidates for the ministry, and to all its ministers generally, to take proper measures to store their minds with as large an amount of useful information, as they possibly can, or to endeavor to become learned and literary men, who have also the unction of the Holy Spirit."

JOHN SEYBERT, } Bishops.  
JOSEPH LONG, }

ABSALOM B. SCHAEFER, Secretary.

The Evangelical Association has not changed her view in this matter since that time, and, quite probably, will never change it.

### § 233. Provisions with Regard to Certain Books.

The subject of the History of our Church that had been acted upon by the last General Conference, but had scarcely begun to bud during the four intervening years, was resumed by this Conference, and met with somewhat better success. Bro. John Dreisbach was now appointed to write said history, to be assisted by the Bishops and the presiding elders of the Church, by collecting and forwarding to him all materials within their reach. Bro. Dreisbach went to work, and the result of his labors was 15 sheets of common foolscap paper, of written matter, which no other man in the whole Church could have accomplished as well, he being better informed about the origin and first twenty years of the Association, than any other man living.

Another measure of General Conference, was a resolution ordering the compilation and publication of a catechism, containing the fundamental

doctrines of Christianity, as they are taught in the confession of faith of the Association, for the instruction of the young. This work was assigned to Rev. William W. Orwig, but was not completed till 1846, and shortly afterward published. The appearance of this catechism filled some sister Churches with no little astonishment, as they had erroneously placed the Evangelical Association on an equal footing with some other denominations, who regard all catechisms and catechetical instruction as remnants of Babel, and, consequently, as dangerous and injurious. The origin of this wrong opinion has already been accounted for in a former part of this history. The catechism was afterward published also in English, but catechetical instruction had, hitherto, not been generally introduced into the connection. There was still some prejudice against it, on account of its abuse in some other Churches ; and too many of the preachers were negligent in recommending and introducing it. Others, having witnessed its salutary effects in the thorough conversion of many of their catechumens, while they were under instruction, were so much in favor of it, that they regarded its neglect as a remissness, that ought not to be overlooked any longer.

Conference also ordered a new edition of George Miller's "*Practical Christianity*" (German) to be prepared. As the original was very defective in style and arrangement, Bro. William W. Orwig was instructed to revise and improve it. This little work had been highly esteemed in our Church, and deserves to be so still. It was written by George Miller, in 1811, but did not appear in print till 1814. It is the only devotional book written by a minister of our Church in its early times ; it discusses practical Christianity in a very satisfactory manner, and ought, therefore, to be found in the library of every family of our connection.

Furthermore, Conference ordered that our two German hymn-books be condensed into one, to be called "*Evangelisches Gesangbuch*" (Evangelical Hymn-Book), which was to be stereotyped with the small types of our pocket Bible ; but, fortunately, this resolution was not carried out. To condense the two books into one, might perhaps not have been out of place ; but to stereotype it in the manner indicated, would, at that time, have been a great error.

The new officers of the Publishing House, Adam Ettinger and John C. Reisner, were appointed a committee to compile the new book from the two old ones : the "*Saitenspiel*" and the "*Viole*", and to prepare it for the press. But as the committee had not carried out its instructions at the meeting of the next General Conference, other arrangements were made, and the two books ordered to be published. And as it is always easier to find fault than to do better, there were not wanting those who were displeased with the new editions, as soon as they left the press ; but, on the whole, they were favorably received. The books had undergone a thorough change ; many stanzas and parts of hymns, and even whole hymns that were particularly esteemed by some, were left out ; and as the revising

committee was not able to assign the reason for every change, omission and addition, and was, moreover, not infallible, nothing else could be expected than that some would find fault with the books. They, however, afterward sold so readily, that the demands for them could sometimes not be met.

#### § 234. Officers of the Publishing House.

William W. Orwig had been the Editor of the Periodical since the erection of the Publishing House, and also the General Agent since the death of Bro. Buck. But this Conference elected Adam Ettinger as Editor, and John C. Reisner as General Agent, and gave them William Bersch for an assistant. This brother having been employed for a number of years in the Publishing House, his services had become almost indispensable and were retained until his death. His connection with the Publishing House was regarded by himself as providential; for, soon after his conversion to God in the city of Philadelphia, he relinquished his business there, and removed, at the suggestion of Bro. Hesser, who was then stationed at Philadelphia, to New Berlin, with the expectation of finding employment in our Publishing House, which had just been started. Upon his arrival at New Berlin, Bro. Orwig received him, assigned him some rooms in the building of the Publishing House for his dwelling, employed him at his own expense, in packing the Paper, reading proof, etc., and gave him Fletcher's Appeal to translate into German. In this way he became acquainted with the business, and was, after a few years, employed altogether in the Publishing House. Thus he became thoroughly acquainted and practiced in all the branches of the business, so that his services could scarcely be dispensed with, especially at the frequent change of the officers of the Establishment. Ettinger and Reisner held their offices only four years, and the next General Conference elected new officers.

#### § 235. Election of Bishops.

The territory of the Association having become too extensive for one Bishop to travel over, this Conference resolved to elect two Bishops, and, accordingly, John Seybert was re-elected, and Joseph Long\* for the first time elevated to this highest office in the Church. The episcopal dignity in the Ev. Association, however, is scarcely enviable, and indeed is only nominal.

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\*) Joseph Long was a very plain, tall, and stately person. God had endowed him with unusual talents for the office of the ministry. He was mighty in the Scriptures, and powerful as a pulpit orator. At this Conference he preached an extraordinarily unctuous sermon which contributed much toward his election to the episcopacy. He was always re-elected until his decease in 1869.

Bishop Long entertained the same view as did his colleague, Bishop Seybert, of the greatness and importance of the episcopal office and realized the responsibility it

The influence of a Bishop of this communion depends, therefore, not on the dignity of the office, but on the incumbent's qualifications for the office, the interest he takes in all institutions and enterprises of the Church, combined with his fidelity and zeal in the discharge of his duties. If he commands, in all these things, the general respect of the ministers and members, the way is open for him to exert not only a very extensive, but also a very salutary influence on the whole connection. But if he fails in one or the other of these items, his influence is proportionately less and his usefulness diminished.\*

Of his power in the Society no one need be afraid, as it is in some respects more limited than that of several other officers of the Church. The same is the case with his privileges. At the conferences he has to act as chairman, but has no right to vote, except when there is a tie, then he gives the casting vote. He is, however, since 1867, an *ex-officio* member of the General Conference and has the right to vote when not in the Chair. Whoever, therefore, seeks the office of a Bishop in the Ev. Association, desires indeed "a good", but by no means desirable "work."

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imposes. After his election he soon started for East Pennsylvania, "over the mountains" as he says in his diary. As he was leaving his home in Columbiana County, Ohio, he entered once more the "feed aisle" in his barn, "where God had so often heard his prayers," cast himself upon his knees, and prayed with many tears to God for the "special sufficiency" from on high, the need of which he felt so sensibly in order to discharge his official duties faithfully. He believed that God and the Church had entrusted this office to him and that its functions, duties and responsibilities were of immense bearing. A side-light indicating his views in this direction is given by a certain document which he issued some years afterward in the case of a change of a preacher from one presiding elder district to another, in the East Pa. Conference, which he sent to one of the presiding elders concerned, as follows: "In virtue of the office which God and the Church have entrusted to me, to benefit and not to destroy, I order," etc., etc. Upon this he added the names of the respective preachers and fields of labor, involved in the case.

For proper information concerning the functions of the Bishop's office among us, we refer the reader to the "*Special Duties of the Bishop*" in the Discipline of the Ev. Association. That alone tells what the office involves. And certainly any candid reader will, after a careful perusal of that section, be ready to exclaim: "Who is sufficient for these things?"

\*) Rev. William W. Orwig, who wrote these paragraphs originally, evidently draws a radical distinction between this "highest office" in the Church and its "dignity." In this he is right. The *highness* or greatness of the *office* is found in its functions as prescribed and delineated in the book of Discipline under the question: "What are the Special Duties of the Bishop?" Those duties are almost too great for any human being. But "dignity" as relating to an ecclesiastical office is in our Bishops almost nothing. In this *prelatical* sense the word means: rank, order, title, distinction, etc. Now the Bishops of the Ev. Association constitute no special order or rank; they are elected for four years only, they are not ordained as Bishops, they bear no special title, such as, "Right Reverend," etc., they wear no special dress, they have no especial insignia about them—they are in these respects "like unto their brethren" in the ministry.

### § 236. Formation of the Illinois Conference.

The Ohio Conference whose territory had become very extensive, was relieved of its outlying fields in Indiana and Illinois, by the formation of a new Conference called *Illinois* Conference. This then was the fourth Annual Conference. By this arrangement it became much easier and less expensive for the preachers of both Conferences to attend their annual sessions and the work in the West received a powerful impetus, as from now on two presiding elders devoted their whole time to it, and the preachers generally became acquainted with all parts of the work much sooner. The time for the sessions of the Annual Conferences was changed and the *Palestinian* nomenclature of some presiding elder districts, such as "*Canaan*," "*Zion*," "*Salem*" "*Carmel*," and "*Tabor*" was exchanged for geographical names, and called, respectively, *Harrisburg*, *Baltimore*, *Susquehannah*, *Allegheny* and *Columbiana*. This change was sensible and practical, and thereafter only *geographical* names were used by the different Conferences.

### § 237. A Delegation from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

A delegation from the Methodist Episcopal Church, which had been appointed by the General Conference of that denomination in 1840, waited upon this Conference and presented proposals tending to relations of closer friendship between the two bodies, to enable them to lend each other mutual aid, battle with better success against the enemies of the Cross and labor for the temporal and spiritual welfare of the neglected Germans of this country. This delegation consisted of Reverends *John F. Wright*, *N. Callender* and *William Nast*. Only the two last named attended the Conference, however. They delivered an address on the subject of their mission, and presented a statement of their object in writing, praying that a reply might be given them. We here insert this address as afterwards published in the *Christliche Apologete*:

#### "TO THE BISHOP AND THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION.

*Dear Brethren*:—From the official extract from the protocol of the General Conference of the M. E. Church, held in 1840, and from a certificate drawn up by one of its secretaries, which two documents we hereby present to you, you will see that we are the delegates appointed by the proper authorities, to your General Conference.

It is our first duty to present to your body the Christian salutation and sincere friendship of our General Conference, which represents, as you know, all the preachers and members of the M. E. Church; and we would entreat you to receive our expressed assurance of high regard and esteem not as a mere compliment, but as the language of the heart, under the sacred influences of true friendship and religion.

You will also permit us to express the hope, that this will be only the beginning of a lasting friendly relation between the two bodies, whereby the best interests of both may be promoted, and other important advantages secured. We are fully persuaded, that a firmly established friendship between the Evangelical Association and the M. E. Church will be attended with the blessed effects of opposing the common enemies of true Christianity more effectually, and of promoting the interests of a pure and undefiled worship with greater success.

We agree in doctrine, and our disciplines, constitutions, and customs, resemble each other so much, that the Evangelical Association was, in many places, called by the people, for a long time, the "German Methodists." Our faith and our institutions have, for this reason, the same enemies. We likewise firmly believe, that we have the same ends in view, viz., the glory of God and the salvation of immortal souls. We, therefore, extend to you the right hand of fellowship, and beg of you to unite your strength with ours in some way or other that we may discuss and agree upon, in order that the great cause of our Redeemer may be promoted.

However, desirable it might be, that all Germans, who are *Methodists* in doctrine, experience, discipline, and customs, should enter into the same organization and bear the same banner; there are, at present, undoubtedly, too many impediments in our way to become *one in name*; but we see no solid reason, why we should not be *one* in truth and in deed, so that we may strengthen each other's hands, to-wit:—

1. By a publicly recognized relation of friendship, similar to that which has existed in some places between the Lutherans and Reformed, and has led to the use of a common Hymn Book. Such an understanding would be attended with blessed effects, and especially prevent our interfering with each other in our fields of labor.

2. By acting in concert in publishing the standard works of Methodist theology, as for instance the sermons of Wesley, a systematic statement of our articles of faith, and a commentary on the Bible. We doubt not that arrangements could be made, by which we might lend each other effectual aid in publishing books, without any disadvantage arising therefrom to either party. Providence has led several individuals into our ranks, whose services in the performance of the necessary literary works would be important; yet as the number of our German members is too small, and hence our support too limited, we would not be prepared as yet to venture upon the publication of any of the named larger works.

For the last eight years the M. E. Church has directed its attention with tender concern and increasing interest to the German immigrants, who are swelling the population of our country. This field is already white to harvest, and an important object of our mission is, to seek the assistance of your Revd. body, or to ask leave to offer you our assistance, in cultivat-

ing this important missionary field. Our Church has entered upon that field, in obedience, as we believe, to a direct call of God who, by the most remarkable openings of his providence, has led us from step to step, and, as it were, compelled us by the force of circumstances. The eminent success which has crowned our labors, fully justifies the belief that the hand of God is in the work, and his blessing resting upon us.

Since the Fall of 1838, the number of our German members has risen from 24 to 2,000, and there are now 24 German itinerants laboring in our midst. We have already built 14 (German) churches. Multitudes of precious souls meet there from time to time, worshiping God according to our customs, and offering up their prayers and thanksgiving in the German language. Many of them were once Papists, and paid Roman priests for the forgiveness of their sins; 'but having been justified by faith, they now have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.' All this has been accomplished in the short period of eight years. 'This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.'

We now have, dear Brethren, discharged our solemn duty, as delegates of the General Conference of the M. E. Church, by laying before you the great enterprise, upon which we have entered. We now leave our proposals with you, hoping that you will take them into careful consideration; and whatever may be the result of your deliberations on them, we would respectfully ask you to return us an answer in writing, in order to lay it before our next General Conference, which will meet in the city of New York, May 1, 1844.

Our prayer is, that the Great Head of the Church may be with your General Conference, and his Spirit guide you in all your deliberations, so that all your resolutions may meet his approbation, and be crowned with his blessing. May you and all members of your Church be led in safety through the toils and sufferings of this life, and finally be received into heaven with all believers of every name and description, to inherit eternal life through Jesus Christ! Amen.

We remain, in the bonds of love and with great respect,

Dear Brethren,

Yours in Christ,

J. F. WRIGHT,  
N. CALLENDER,  
WM. NAST."

To this address, our General Conference returned the following reply, as drawn up by a committee for that purpose.

"TO THE DELEGATES OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE M. E. CHURCH.

*Dear Brethren:*—In compliance with the request expressed in your written address, we return to you the following reply:—

We feel ourselves under obligation to you for your friendly salutations and expression of fraternal regard for us, and do sincerely wish that you may not be disappointed in your expectations that this will be but the beginning of a lasting friendly relation between your Church and ours. We fully agree with you, that there are strong reasons why we should endeavor to unite our mutual influence as much as possible, in fighting against the enemies of the Cross, and in laboring for the reformation of the Germans of this country. We also entertain the same views you have expressed on the character and condition of the German immigrants in general, and are, therefore, perfectly willing and ready, to extend to you the right hand of fellowship, and to do, on our part, what we possibly can, in order to secure their temporal and everlasting welfare. Although we neither go by the same name nor belong to the same organization, yet it will afford us pleasure to enter with you into friendly relations, so that we may labor together in harmony and love, without hindering each other in the least, in carrying forward the great work which the Lord has assigned us. But in order to realize this end, it will be necessary for us to use the utmost care, to act harmoniously in enforcing the Discipline of the Church, and in reprovng sin of every shape and description. We are of opinion, that it will be especially necessary for us to be on our guard, not to take advantage of each other, wherever the two Churches may meet in the prosecution of their work, nor to receive members that have been excluded by the other Church for immoral conduct, until such individuals have become reconciled to their Church and bring a testimony to that effect. Whether it would be best for both of us to build, like the Lutherans and the Reformed, union-churches, and to introduce a common Hymn-Book, we do not presume to decide; we doubt, however, that any real advantage would be gained thereby for the realization of our great object.

A union for the purpose of publishing good German books, would be highly desirable; but our book establishments being at so great a distance from each other, we do not see how this could be effected in any other way, than by a mutual agreement to exchange and take each other's books on commission, etc.\*

We rejoice that God's blessings have rested upon your labors among the Germans, and wish that this may be still more so hereafter. It will likewise afford us pleasure to contribute hereafter, in Christian fellowship with you, much toward the amelioration of the condition of the Germans, by the blessing of God resting upon our united labors. Our earnest prayer is, that the Great Giver of every good gift may fill us all with his Spirit,

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\*) In our time it reads curiously that the two Publishing Houses were too far apart, in order to issue books jointly, but in those days there were no railroads nor telegraphs between the two towns, New Berlin, Pa., and Cincinnati, O., and the mail service was very deficient. No doubt the proposed issue of theological books, etc., would have been very advantageous for both denominations.

sanctify and lead us into all truth, and finally take us with all the elect into his heavenly kingdom, for his Son's sake ! Amen.

Respectfully,

Your Brethren,

JOHN DREISBACH,  
JOHN C. REISNER,  
ADAM ETTINGER,  
WILLIAM W. ORWIG,  
CHARLES HAMMER.

Summit Co., O., October 25, 1843.

The public initiative toward this official conference on the subject in question, was a resolution of the General Conference of the M. E. Church, which was published in the "Christian Advocate and Journal," and copied with comments in the *Christliche Botschafter*. The resolution in question was as follows :—

"Since some of the leading men of the Evangelical Association, commonly called '*Albrights*,' have expressed a wish to maintain a friendly intercourse with the M. E. Church, and taken a deep interest in our plans and efforts to advance the best interests of the many German immigrants that settle in our country ; therefore,

Resolved, That a delegation of three be appointed by the bishops of this conference, whose duty it shall be to attend their next General Conference, and impart to them our fraternal salutation and sincere friendship ; and that the said delegates be likewise authorized to confer with that body on the prospects of circulating our German periodicals and other works among them, and on any other subject that has reference to the great interests of the European or native Germans of our country."

From the comments of the *Botschafter* on this resolution we quote the following :—

"The respect and friendship shown us by the General Conference of the M. E. Church in the above resolution, deserve our consideration, and ought to be regarded and treated by us as a token of their Christian and fraternal disposition toward us ; and, whereas their doctrines, ecclesiastical polity, and mode of operation, have, from the beginning, been essentially ours, for which reason we have felt a stronger attachment to them than to others ; and as they have of late also commenced to labor among the Germans, we ought now to endeavor the more to maintain a friendly intercourse with them, and to take all proper measures, in order that we may labor in unison with them for the spiritual interests of the many thousands of German immigrants and others, who have hitherto been neglected, and thus help to build up the kingdom of God. Such a friendship and union between them and us, appear to us, under the present circumstances, to be indispensably necessary. We shall, in all probability, in our future labors among the Germans, meet in some places ; and as we have the same doc-

trines and mode of operation, it will be the more necessary to guard on both sides against over-reaching each other; because from such conduct of professed Christians the cause of Christ has been, at all times, and still is suffering very much."

The correctness of the views here expressed, has since been abundantly proved; but the desired friendship and mutual foresight and peaceableness have, alas! in many individual cases, been too frequently violated. Time and again, when the ministers of the two Churches happened to labor on the same field or in the same place, especially in the West, collisions have taken place, which caused unpleasant feelings. We express, however, the sincere wish that nothing of the kind may take place again. There is still a peaceful relation between the two Churches, and we hope it will ever be sustained.

The resolution of the General Conference of the M. E. Church, induced some to think that the object was to bring about a formal *union* of the two Churches, although the document itself was silent about it. Whether this opinion was well-founded or not, we are not prepared to say; but certain it is, that many members of both Churches have since expressed their regret that no stronger efforts were made to bring about a union, at a time when its realization might have been possible. And some would still be in favor of such a union, if they could only see how it might be done.\*

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\* ) *Rev. William Nast*, D.D., who was the leading member of this delegation, has been called, in a denominational sense, the "Father of German Methodism." He came to America from Wurtemberg, Germany, in 1828, and was converted among the Methodists, after a severe penitential struggle, in 1835. He then felt constrained to labor as a missionary among the Germans in Cincinnati and its surroundings, who were mostly fresh immigrants, in order to lead them to repentance and conversion. The Methodist Church which had until then labored exclusively among the English speaking population, now appointed Mr. Nast as their German Missionary. This took place in 1835. Dr. Nast at that time had no knowledge of the Evangelical Association and its operations. He had already received his appointment as missionary, and the publication of the *Christliche Apologete* had been ordered when he learned who and what the Evangelical Association was. Then he went to New Berlin, Pa., to visit our young Publishing House and become acquainted with its officers and obtain fuller information about the Evangelical Association. He was at once of one heart and mind with the brethren there, with reference to the urgent necessity of doing missionary work among the neglected Germans in this country.—He then continued his labors in preaching and writing. In the latter respect he was particularly well-qualified to take up the battle against the learned rationalists in which field he showed himself a Knight-errant indeed. God blessed his labors among the Germans, whose needs were quite well-understood by him. The *Apologete* whose editor he continued to be for more than *fifty years*, commenced in 1839 with 40 subscribers numbers now (1892) over 19,000, and the German Methodists have become a host of about 70,000 members—with promising prospects for the future. God has intended salvation for the Germans in America. When immigration became so strong that the Evangelical Association could not keep pace with it, the Lord called still other laborers into this harvest.

These were the main acts and proceedings of this General Conference, although it passed, in all, 107 resolutions, many of which required a great deal of time for discussion, and much labor for their enactment. The result of most of these resolutions has been very good.

This Conference was closed with much solemnity, as the record states, as follows :

"The Conference was closed by the newly-elected Bishop Joseph Long with prayer ; and in token of willingness and approval of all the above items and resolutions of these Conference proceedings each member present signed his name to them. *Signatures* :—John Seybert, Joseph Long, John Dreisbach, Philip Wagner, George Brickley, William W. Orwig, Charles Hammer, John C. Reisner, Francis Hoffmann, Adam Ettinger, Jacob Boas, Michael F. Maize, Daniel Kehr, John Geo. Zinser, John J. Kopp, William Muenz, Henry Bucks, Michael Lehn, Joseph M. Saylor, Abraham Niebel, Henry Langbrecht, Lewis Einsel, Jacob Saylor, Jacob Frey, Henry Rohland, George Mattinger, Adam Kleinfelter, Henry Hassler, Elias Stoeber, John P. Leib, Aaron Yambert, Henry Fischer, Absalom B. Schaefer—33."

**§ 288. Impressions Made by This General Conference upon Dr. William Nast and Rev. John Dreisbach.**

What impressions were received by Rev. William Nast with reference to the General Conference, we learn very distinctly from his editorial report in the *Christliche Apologete* of November 20, 1843, as follows :

"On the morning of the 23rd of October the American-German Bro. Holloway brought us from Ravenna to Greensburg, Ohio. The Conference held its session in the Evangelical Church situated about one mile from the village. In accordance with the simplicity, industry, and diligence peculiar to the Germans, the brethren had made arrangements that all the members of Conference take their dinner and supper at the house nearest to the Church. The necessary provisions were brought thither by the members living in the surrounding neighborhood. Each evening the preachers are being sent to new places of lodging for the night, so that the members have the opportunity to become acquainted with all the preachers."—After Dr. Nast had mentioned the great sadness that came upon the Conference by the unexpected death of Charles Hesser and the unctuous sermon by Bishop Seybert on Acts 11, 24, he continues thus : "We arrived on Monday afternoon when the session was about being closed and were received

Both Churches are united in spirit, and scarcely a valid reason can be assigned why they should not be also united *organically*—but a number of them might be given in favor of it. At any rate let us hope and pray that these two denominations, as *true sister churches*—so much alike in doctrine, discipline and customs—may peaceably and successfully prosecute their labors, crowned with the blessings of the Great Head of the Church.

in a very friendly manner. Next morning we were presented to Conference and requested to deliver our message. \* \* \* \* We became convinced more than ever before of the oneness that exists among all true followers of Christ. It is a pity, however, that this really existing unity is not confessed and definitely expressed, more frequently. \* \* It is highly desirable for the unity of the different Christian denominations that a full and hearty acknowledgment of the common divine sonship in which they stand, be made and one result of such recognition would be a friendly co-operation in the conversion of the world without infringing upon the work which divine Providence has given each one to do. \* \* \* \* May the preachers and members of these two Churches realize that we are baptized by the same Spirit into one body, yea, that we belong to one family and are related most intimately to each other!—The Evangelical Association is a worthy daughter of the Methodist Church, and though not bearing the name, she has imparted the doctrines and principles of Methodism, in their purity and power, to the German people. May we, as her younger brethren, who bear the name of the mother, show ourselves as worthy of our origin in walking in the foot-steps of our fathers, with all earnestness, self-denial, full of the Holy Spirit, in continual fellowship with God growing in knowledge and wisdom, and in being an *ornament* to the Gospel also outwardly in speech, demeanor, and dress!—All these virtues I observed exist in a high degree, in these men of God who constitute the General Conference, and the feelings of intimate love and high respect which I always cherished toward the Evangelical Association were renewed and increased by the personal acquaintance with delegates of their General Conference.”

Bro. John Dreisbach described his impressions and emotions during this session of Conference in a letter to the editor of the *Christliche Botschafter*, in the following interesting manner :

“*Dear Bro. Orwig!* I hope you arrived safely at home from the General Conference, being now engaged again in preparing the *Christliche Botschafter*, filled with an abundance of acceptable and useful news for its readers. We are also with our dear family again after a difficult but safe journey, and found them all well. God, our heavenly Father, be praised ! But since I am home again I have been ailing, for which reason I have not written sooner. I do wish—if I only could!—to communicate to the friends of Zion the impressions I received at General Conference. Here were thirty-two delegates assembled—excepting the Bishop—one-fourth of the ordained ministers of the Evangelical Association, who are all spiritual children of our Zion, that is to say, they have been awakened, converted and promoted to the ministry through the service of the Gospel in our Church. Praise ye the Lord ! Yes, my friends, here I was among these delegates—men of God—preachers, of whom no Church in Christendom would need be ashamed, but would rather have good reason to boast. Oh, how my heart melted with humble gratitude to God for his work of

grace in the Evangelical Association ; although planted by Him, like a mustard seed, she has grown to a tree full of branches, although herself only a branch of the General Christian Church, to bless the Germans of our country. There, among these brethren, I remembered especially the past—the time when in 1806 I found the peace of God and joined the Evangelical Association. At that time the whole number of members was but 120. And in 1807, when, on the 6th of November, I yielded to the Divine call to become an itinerant preacher, the number of traveling preachers was only 5, namely Jacob Albright, John Walter, George Miller, and myself, newly-received on probation, and J. F., who did not hold out long. Albright preached but three or four times after that and died in about six months. Charles Bissey, Jacob Philips, Solomon Miller, sen., and Christopher Spangler were the local preachers—all young beginners. We had two circuits, the first was called *Lancaster Circuit* and extended along the Blue Mountains from the vicinity of Harrisburg unto near Easton, through the counties of Dauphin, Lebanon, Lancaster, Berks, Bucks, Northampton, Lehigh, and Schuylkill in Pa. The other was called *Shamokin* and extended through the counties of Northumberland, Union, Center, and Mifflin in the same State. These two were our first fields of labor on which we traveled interchangeably under many hardships, preaching the Gospel of the Crucified One. We met with great difficulties, were scoffed at, stigmatized by libelous publications, often we were stoned, and clubbed. Rotten eggs, yea, mud were thrown at us !—Thus we were treated by the rabble ; but also some of the more respectable people looked upon us as being seducers of the people or self-willed fanatics. To endure all this required much faith, love, and patience, to be sought and obtained by earnest prayer, and supplication with tears from Him who promised never to leave us nor forsake us. We were so strengthened, however, that we could say : ‘The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me.’ Who would then have thought that this despised little flock, this down-trodden little worm, would yet occupy so extensive a territory and spread in such manner as we see it to-day ? ‘This is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes ; this is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it ; save now, I beseech thee, O Lord, send now prosperity.’ I was exceedingly pleased to see the forbearance, brotherly love, and respect among the brethren to observe, consequently, the evident blessing and peace accompanying the proceedings of the Conference ; and also the improvement of the Conference rules for the more systematic dispatch of the business but more especially the unctuous preaching—oh, how I enjoyed it all !

“ But oh, how I felt humbled because of my inactivity, and how unfit and weak I felt in body and poor in spirit ! But God gave me grace to rejoice in his work among my brethren, and I believe that he will ‘not cast me off in the time of old age nor forsake me when my strength faileth,

until I have showed thy strength unto this generation and thy power to every one that is to come.' Psalm 71, 9-18. 'Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things, and blessed be his glorious name for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen and Amen! Psalm 72, 18-19. Oh, ye friends of the Lord; it is good to trust in the Lord and not rely upon men. He is a shield to all who trust in him! Hallelujah!—

JOHN DREISBACH.

Pickaway Township and County, Ohio, Nov. 22nd, 1843."

From the foregoing testimonies it is evident that this session of General Conference was attended with special blessings from the Great Head of the Church.

### § 239. The Annual Conference Sessions.

The Annual Conferences of this year took place as follows: East Pennsylvania Conference met in Lebanon, Pa., on March 22d; West Pennsylvania Conference in the Leathart Springs Church, North Middleton Township, Cumberland County, Pa., April 15th, and that of Ohio in the church in Thompson Township, Seneca County, Ohio, May 10th. Three itinerants located, and 17 were received on trial. Eleven were ordained as elders, and 14 as deacons. Some of the larger circuits were divided, and a number of new circuits and stations formed; several missions were changed into circuits, and new missions established at Pittsburg, Dayton, Chicago, and Milwaukee. The rich harvest of the previous year had extended the limits of the Association considerably, and greatly increased the labors of the itinerancy.

This year the work again extended considerably, and in some places great awakenings took place; but, although nearly 2,400 new members were received during the year, the net increase was not quite 800; the Society must, consequently, have lost 1,600 members this year—a fact we can hardly account for. This heavy loss was, undoubtedly, to a great measure owing to the re-action of Millerism, which, however, cannot have been the sole cause. The fault must lie somewhere else; and it is probable, that want of proper attention to the new converts, is one of the main causes of the heavy loss of members, that takes place annually. The loss exceeds the net increase almost every year; this year it amounted to more than half of it. In the frequent changes of our ministers, we opine to find another cause of this deplorable phenomenon; for it often happens that the most conversions take place, and the greatest number of new members are received, toward the close of the preacher's ministerial labors on a circuit or station, many of whom are ensnared again by the world or by Satan, before the arrival of the new preacher; while others, not feeling as strongly attached to the new minister as to the old, by whose instrumentality they were converted, grow cold again by degrees, so that ere long

scarcely any fruit is left of great awakenings ; especially if the succeeding minister is careless about making pastoral calls, and attending to the lambs of the flock. This is a disadvantage connected with the itinerant system, which cannot be questioned. By greater carefulness, however, more regular visits, and a deeper interest in the welfare of immortal souls, this evil might be remedied to a great extent ; especially, if every minister, on entering upon his new field of labor, would make it his special duty to call on the new converts, in order to become acquainted with them, and to gain their confidence, and, on the whole, treat them with marked attention and distinction.

#### § 240. Successful Missionary Work.

Although the increase of this year was inferior to that of the year before, yet the boundaries of the Association were considerably extended, a number of new preaching places were taken up, a large number of new classes formed, and many of the old ones were considerably increased. The missions, especially, did very well. In the city of New York and at Germantown, within the East Pennsylvania Conference, the work gained a solid footing ; although it had, in the former place, to struggle against great difficulties, arising mainly out of the building of a church. The missions of the West Pennsylvania Conference at York and Pittsburg, were abundantly blessed of God. Levi Eberhart was the first missionary in the city of Pittsburg, and labored there for two years with great success. He arrived there on the last day of April, 1843, immediately commenced his labors among the Germans, and as early as the following Whitsuntide an attempt was made to organize a society. He shortly after rented a large hall in the old court house, and preached there three times a week, and once in Allegheny City. The number of hearers increased from time to time, and the prospects of the enterprise were bright before the close of the first year. Bishop Long visited the mission in December, and made the following remarks with regard to it : “The prospects of this mission are very promising ; it is, however, to be regretted that we have no church of our own. \* \* \* \* The hall in the court house is already too small for the number of hearers who would like to attend our meetings.” A considerable number of precious souls had, at that time, been converted to the Lord, and at the end of the conference year the society numbered 32 members. The next year they built a small church on Hand-street, but became thereby involved in debt, and great difficulties were the consequence ; and yet the new church was neither large enough, nor conveniently located. But as a number of extensive revivals took place from time to time, the society increased and acquired strength by degrees.

The new mission at Dayton in the Ohio Conference, and several of the others in the far West, especially the Mount Carmel and Fort Wayne missions, prospered greatly. At Chicago and Milwaukee the work advanced

gradually, although no considerable awakenings took place during this year.

Thus far the annual contributions had covered the missionary expenses; but as their number now began to increase rapidly, the treasury of the missionary society soon became involved in debt, against which it had to struggle for a number of years. But, as the conferences which contracted the debts, also held themselves responsible for their payment, this matter was of no importance, and caused the parent board no further troubles. It ought to be stated here that, although all the Annual Conferences had formed themselves into branch societies of the parent society, yet each conference kept its contributions in its own treasury, and also applied them. This was not in accordance with the constitution of the parent society; but, as it bade fair to be most liberally supported, and to promote the good cause most efficiently for the time being, it was not objected to. But in the course of time a change of this state of things became necessary.

#### § 241. Success on the Circuits.

In the East Pennsylvania Conference the circuits of Lancaster, Leikens, Womelsdorf and, above all, Lehigh, seem to have prospered most. The particular places and parts of country, however, where the greatest success attended our labors, are, with a few exceptions, not mentioned in the published reports of those circuits.

A rather extensive revival took place in Mahantango Valley, in the neighborhood of Hepler's; another in Meyerstown, Lebanon County, where arrangements were made for the erection of a church. In 1837, D. Klapp removed from Orwigsburg to Meyerstown, and our ministers preached regularly in his house. In 1839 a fine class was formed there, and from that time the work gained a solid footing. Upon the whole, the work in the North did not progress as finely as it had done in the preceding years; yet it advanced gradually, especially in several places.

In the West Pa. Conference the following circuits had most success: Center, Perry, Cumberland, York, Virginia, Bedford, Clarion, Lycoming, Gettysburg, and Somerset. On Center circuit the number of new converts was 116. Glorious awakenings took place at Millheim, Penn's Valley, and Rebersburg, in Brush Valley and vicinity, and other places of the circuit. Perry circuit reported 90 newly received members; it had the services of but one preacher, Bro. James Dunlap.

The principal work of grace seems to have taken place at Milford, where arrangements were forthwith made to build a church. In Kingston, on Cumberland circuit, the work had begun the year before, and this year already a church was built; another was built at Leesburg. On York circuit a camp-meeting was held this year, which numbered 60 tents, and not less than 40 souls were converted, most of whom joined our Church. The

camp-meetings that were held this year, during the latter part of Summer, were, on the whole, highly blessed and victorious; while those held in the forepart, were not as good as usual.

In Ohio Conference the Fort Wayne mission reported 66 newly received members, Mount Carmel mission 50, Pickaway circuit 54, and that of Sandusky 51. All the other circuits and missions fell short of 50; Canton, Mansfield, Crawford and Miami, however, came nearly up to this number. On the whole, this Conference held this year the second rank among the three conferences, in point of newly received members.

The Des Plaines and Rock River circuits in the State of Illinois, the former served by Christopher Kopp, and the latter by Levi Heiss and John G. Miller, together reported 79 newly received members and in all 298. But a new district having been formed this year out of these two circuits and the missions at Chicago and Milwaukee, ministered to by Samuel Baumgartner, there were brighter anticipations indulged in for the future, and also realized.

This year our second church was built in the State of Illinois, viz., at Naperville, Dupage County, and the first commenced in Wisconsin; this is also said to have been the first German Protestant church in that State. At Chicago likewise a church was built this year and dedicated, which was also the first German Protestant church of that city, and for a number of years the only one. Our society is likewise the oldest German Protestant congregation there, and was the only one for about five years.

At that time certain would-be Lutheran ministers forced themselves upon the Germans of Wisconsin; but they deserved not that name, on account of their immorality, bigotry and intolerance, and, together with the advocates of infidelity, assisted in making the people still more immoral. Under these circumstances, our ministers and societies had a difficult task to solve, and this the more so as they were the only Germans there in those days, who fought the battles of the Lord.

The increase of members in this conference year was 883, and at the close of the year the whole number of members amounted to 13,908.

#### § 242. Rev. Charles Hesser.

Bro. Charles Hesser was the only minister of the Association, who died during this year. His unexpected death, in consequence of an accident he met with on his way to General Conference, caused, as before stated, great grief and many tears among the delegates of the conference, and was deeply lamented by all who had known him. His death was caused in the following manner: On the 6th of October, he and the Brethren Henry Fisher, Joseph M. Saylor, and Michael F. Maize, started in a two-horse carriage, in order to attend General Conference, to be held in the State of Ohio. The following day they dined with Bro. Daniel Zartman in Jackson Township, Northumberland County, Pa.; and thence starting,

they drove down hill, when the tongue of the carriage came loose, and, touching the horses, caused one of them to kick so furiously as to hit and break Bro. Hesser's leg, who was holding the reins. A fever ensued in consequence of this wound, and in five days he died, October 12th. His remains were taken to Orwigsburg, his native place, and buried there the following Sunday, October 15th, in the burying-ground of the Association; Bro. John Sensel preached his funeral sermon to a very large and deeply affected concourse of people, from Luke 2, 29-30: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." He left a widow and four children.

Bro. Hesser was converted about 1824, during the great revival at Orwigsburg and vicinity. A few years afterward he was licensed to preach, entered the itinerancy in 1831, and was stationed with Bro. Philip Wagner on Center circuit, where he preached with much applause and with marked success. The following year he traveled with Solomon G. Miller on Union circuit, and was universally beloved. In 1833 he was stationed for the second time on Center circuit, as the superintending preacher, with John Young for his colleague. In 1834 he traveled Cumberland, and in 1835 Lebanon circuit, and labored successfully and with acceptance on these two circuits, although no special awakenings took place during that time. In 1836 he traveled again on Cumberland circuit, and in 1837 he was sent, for the first time, to Philadelphia, where he labored for two successive years with glorious results, and rendered general satisfaction. In 1839 and part of 1840, he traveled on Schuylkill circuit; he was then stationed again at Philadelphia, and in 1842 and 1843, to the end of his earthly career, he traveled on Lehigh circuit. Thus he served the Church as an itinerant a little over 12 years, and died at the age of 35 years, 11 months, and 7 days.

Bro. Hesser was universally beloved; he was well built, about 5 feet and 8 inches high, rather slender, with regular features, sharp clear eyes, of rather dark complexion, cheerful disposition, and nearly always of pleasant mien. His manners in the pulpit were very pleasing, his voice was penetrating and resonant, and his discourses were always touching. In almost every sermon, part of his audience wept, and the impressions they received were often lasting. Although he often attacked sin in detail and without fear or favor, his hearers took no offence because of his influence over them. He was a talented orator, but not deep in his scriptural expositions or explanations of texts. His strength did not lie in this direction, but rather in his touching appeals, his expressions of sympathy, and in his pleasant conduct toward everybody. His biographer says of him among other things:—

"He was one of those few who have almost no enemies, and everybody for their friend. As a private citizen, he was strictly moral and without blemish in his conduct; as a Christian, he was courageous and resolute, to

suffer for Christ and the truth; as a minister of the Gospel, he was well qualified and full of unction. He filled his office with credit and dignity, and blew the trumpet of the good news of the great salvation in Christ Jesus with clearness and indefatigableness. His discourses were strictly evangelical, animated, instructive, and greatly calculated to engage the attention of the audience; and there is no doubt, that a vast amount of good has been accomplished by his labors in the vineyard of the Lord."

Cheerful and courageous, as he had been in life, so he was also in death; and thus he fell in the triumphs of faith as a conqueror on the field of the Gospel. His dying words were: "*Glory be to the Lamb forever and ever!*" and thus he died happy in the Lord.

#### § 243. Another Prosperous Conference Year.

The annual conferences in 1844 were held as follows: The East Pa., at Orwigsburg, Pa., on the 28th of February; the West Pa., at Millheim, Center Co., Pa., on the 13th of March, and the Ohio at Lafayette, Wayne Co., Ohio, on the 8th of May. Eight preachers located and nineteen were received into the itinerancy.

The East Pennsylvania Conference formed two new circuits, viz.: Northampton, consisting of parts of Lehigh and Milford circuits, and Dauphin, consisting of parts of Lebanon and Lancaster circuits. This Conference also established new missions at Reading, Pa., and Syracuse, N. Y. In the West Pa., no preacher left the itinerancy this year, a rare occurrence. This Conference also formed two new circuits, viz.: West Moreland and Loyalsack, and a new district called Potomac district, consisting of parts of Baltimore and Allegheny districts. Ohio Conference changed some of its missions into circuits and established new missions at Chillicothe, O., Peoria, Ill., and Galena, Ill.

The newly formed Illinois Conference, being still embodied in the Ohio Conference, held no session as yet. It consisted of two districts, viz.: Indiana and Illinois districts upon which presiding elders and preachers were stationed separately by the Ohio Conference. The former district was served by Absalom B. Schaefer and the latter by Samuel Baumgartner, both sturdy pioneers in the western wilds, who were not easily discouraged by difficulties and inconveniences nor frightened away from their posts.

The Conference extended over large portions of the States of Indiana and Illinois, as far as Wisconsin and Iowa, and was about 500 miles long and nearly 400 wide, numbering 14 preachers, 763 members, 3 circuits, 6 missions, 5 churches, 5 Sunday-schools and about 50 preaching places, some of which were from 60 to 80 miles apart, and almost inaccessible on account of the unbeaten, trackless prairies, swamps and unbridged rivers. The preachers frequently missed the right direction on the pathless prairies,

lost their way, and wandered about till late at night, yea sometimes had to spend even the night there. The sainted Bro. Lintner related a few months before his death, that once he wandered about on such a prairie for a whole day and a night, and part of the following day, during a severe and very cold snow-storm, without meeting with a house or human being, in the certain apprehension of death. Fortunately his life was saved. At another time, he and his horse almost froze to death. Many of the earliest preachers in the far West, suffered similarly. These were trials, such as those ministers had often to pass through. But their labors in the Lord were not in vain; hundreds and thousands of precious souls were converted to the Lord by their instrumentality, who now praise him for the salvation brought to them by these faithful messengers of God.

Bro. Schaefer and the preachers under his care on Indiana district, labored with glorious success. Hearts and doors were opened before them, and their fields of labor extended more and more.

On Illinois district, presided over by Bro. Baumgartner, the work made upon the whole, glorious progress; the circuits and missions were considerably extended and the membership increased, partly by conversions, partly by members coming from the East. At Chicago an awakening took place, and the society was considerably increased. Milwaukee mission, too, grew stronger, both from without and within; from without by taking up a number of new preaching places, and within by the conversion of a goodly number of precious souls.

During this year the brethren commenced to preach at Racine, Wis., and formed a small class. This year Bro. John Niebergall moved with his family, all of whom belonged to the Society, from Lyons, N. Y., to that place, and opened his house to the preachers. He held the first German service in that city—a prayer-meeting—with his wife and a brother, named H. Young, who had, meanwhile, come thither. During this prayer-meeting a soul was awakened and became penitent. Bro. Hauert preached the first German sermon there in September of the same year. This was the beginning of the labors of the Evangelical Association at Racine.

The Galena mission was very large from the beginning, extending over about 300 miles, and increased still more from time to time. The missionary, John G. Miller, labored amid many difficulties and discouragements with indefatigable zeal, and was permitted to see the fruit of his labors.

Bro. Baumgartner and Bishop Seybert also bore their share of the burden of the work in the new country, and set their younger brethren an example of application and perseverance, that could not fail to make very salutary impressions upon them. The Bishop took so deep an interest in the prosperity of the West, both in a temporal and moral point of view, that he traveled; preached, visited and underwent the greatest hardships, in order to promote its best interests.

But all the efforts of the Bishop, the presiding elders and preachers generally, were not sufficient to meet the spiritual wants of the West. The harvest was too plenteous—much too plenteous for the small number of laborers.

This was on the whole a successful conference year, and the increase was more than twice as large as in the previous year. Great awakenings took place in different places. On Leikens circuit in the East Pa. Conference, glorious revivals took place, especially at Berrysburg, beginning at the dedication of a church, and on Lehigh, Northampton and Lebanon circuit, etc. The mission at Syracuse also prospered greatly, and a church was built there during the year.

The new mission in Reading, Pa., did well from its start, although the missionary, Joseph M. Saylor, encountered some difficulties. A more detailed statement of them will show how our missionaries in those times labored, and what courage was often required to overcome the hindrances.

Bro. Saylor had advocated the establishing of a mission in Reading very earnestly at Conference, but to his dismay he was then appointed there himself. When he came there with his family—a number of small children—he knew not where to find lodging, for there were as yet no members there. A family, who had on a previous visit manifested friendliness appeared disinclined now, and closed their door. There the Saylor family stood on the street and knew not where to go; finally they found a place to stay for the night. Next day Bro. Saylor rented a house from a friendly Methodist brother, named Rein, who was well acquainted with Bishop Seybert. On the following day he rented a room above a tannery for preaching, but the people would not go there, then he resolved to transfer the meeting to his house. He procured benches, and Sister Saylor would take up the carpet on Saturdays and then they held meeting on Sundays.

At that time there were no sidewalks in that part of the city, and in wet weather the condition of the room after a meeting can be imagined, better than told, but the tradition is well founded, that the mud could be shoveled out of the room! But some persons were converted. Soon Bro. Saylor perceived the necessity of building a house of worship and bought a lot from Dr. Nagel, and commenced collecting funds for the erection of a church, but at the beginning he received only small sums—nothing higher than \$5.00; then he hired a conveyance, and went into the country on a collecting tour. The edifice was begun and carried forward as circumstances permitted. The contract among other things, stipulated the payment of \$200 as soon as the roof was completed; the time soon arrived and the missionary had not so much as *two hundred cents* toward it, and scarcely any bread in the house. Then to cap the climax, the presiding elder censured the missionary for having begun this building, and told him that he

must now look out himself how to get through with it. Good counsel was rare. Bro. Saylor took his staff in hand, walked ten miles into the country and called upon a wealthy man by the name of Daniel Bertolet who had been a member of the Church but was now dissatisfied with it. This man had encouraged Saylor to begin the work, and now the missionary asked him to advance the \$200 until the session of the annual Conference, but Bertolet answered that he would henceforth have nothing to do with the Evangelical Association.

Upon this Saylor said: "You helped to lead me into this thing, and now you dare not forsake me." Then he loaned Saylor the \$200 upon his note, and thus there came help for the present. The first story of the Church was then completed; during the first protracted meeting a number of persons were converted and the mission became established. When Bro. Saylor commenced the meeting in the church the "ungodly" broke into it and drove the worshipers out, whereupon Dr. Nagel prosecuted these ruffians, and the court duly punished them. Upon this the papers of the town came out in defense of the mission and the tables were turned. From this mission grew several strong congregations, and Reading has become one of the strong-holds of the Evangelical Association.

In the latter part of the Summer of this year (1844) a remarkable occurrence took place at a camp-meeting which a reliable eye-witness relates, as follows:

"A camp-meeting was held on the land of Martin Rosenberger, in Hatfield, Montgomery County, Pa. Bro. Henry Fischer was the presiding elder, and hence the superintendent of the meeting. At that time the work of conversion was yet something new in that section of country, the opposition was strong and there were many rude people of whom a number came to the meeting to make disturbance. On the last day (Friday) the report was received that the meeting would be broken up by those ruffians. Bro. Fischer called the meeting together at the usual time, and read some of the 'rules' to be observed, and then exhorted the people to earnest prayer and confidence in God for His assistance, because the meeting was severely threatened by the powers of darkness. This was followed by singing and prayer and a short, pointed sermon after which an invitation was given to seekers of salvation, when several of them came forward to the altar of prayer. But lo!—there came also the wicked crowd from the upper end of the camp-ground with their gigantic leader at the front, pushing themselves through the congregation coming like an avalanche upon the praying people. Bro. Fischer saw them approach and quickly coming down from the preacher's stand, called upon the friends to pray. Some fled, others fell upon their knees and cried to God, while some others began to praise God aloud. Meanwhile Bro. Fischer had met the Goliath-like leader in the midst of the people and commanded him in the name of the Lord Jehovah to withdraw with his mob. The big fellow declared that his sister was at

the altar of prayer, and he would not leave without taking her along. The excitement became more intense at every moment. The members continued calling upon God and Fischer continued to threaten the leader in the name of the Lord; but see! the ruffian clenches his fists and begins to strike, aiming at Fischer's face, but, strange to tell, could not hit him; every stroke goes amiss and he simply beats the air. Others upon seeing this become astonished. Bro. Fischer being filled with victorious assurance, suddenly took a high leap immediately in front of his opponent and shouted with a thrilling voice: "*Hallelujah!—Glory to God!*" Upon this there arose a glorious shout of victory in the camp. The wicked mob-leader took flight, scrambled over the fence that surrounded the altar, and, as if blinded, ran up against a tent. At last he and his followers found the place of exit, and, taking the shortest route, ran into the darkness of the woods. There they halted, and when one of them asked him: "Why did you run away?" he gasped: "*Yes—among these people—the devil cannot stand it!*" Several brethren who had followed them into the darkness heard this interesting dialogue. This wicked man had told the truth. He himself had realized what he said; and, moreover, meanwhile one penitent after the other who had continued in prayer during the tumult, pressed through from death into divine life. The meeting was continued till late into the night amidst a general shouting of the praises of God. On the following day Bro. Fischer journeyed away in company with some others, who noticed that he was intensely engaged and moved inwardly, and that at times a supernatural smile lit up his countenance." \*

In the West Pa. Conference the work prospered most on Union, Perry, Cumberland, and Warren circuits, where considerable awakenings took place in various parts, especially one near Selinsgrove, on Union circuit.

From the Ohio Conference the reports were meager. Some camp and protracted meetings, however, were greatly blessed. In a report of a camp-meeting held on Columbiana district Bro. Elias Stoeber speaks as follows:

"The third camp-meeting we held on Canton circuit in the month of August, consisting of 60 tents, most of which were occupied together by two families. About 400 friends were present, and the audiences were large and attentive. On Sunday thousands of people met who behaved quite well. This meeting was greatly blessed from beginning to end, and many will long cherish its memory. The preaching of the Gospel was well-received, and at every invitation penitents came to the altar. Between 40 and 50 persons were converted of whom 34 joined the Church. Among the children of God great joy prevailed and their shouts of praise were heard at a distance."

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\*) Reported by Rev. Jesse Yeakel, who attended the meeting and was a close observer of the occurrences.

The increase of members during this Conference year amounted to 1,010 and the whole membership was 14,918.

#### § 244. Bro. Daniel Focht.

This year the Association lost but one of its preachers by death, viz.: Bro. Daniel Focht, of Schuylkill County, in the East Pa. Conference. In connection with the great revival at Orwigsburg, mention has already been made of Bro. Focht, and his character and usefulness have been described to some extent. We therefore insert here but an extract from his biography, which appeared in the *Botschafter*, as follows :—

“ Bro. Daniel Focht died happy in the Lord, March 16, 1844, at his old residence in Brunswick township, Schuylkill County, Pa., in his 61st year. His disease was a nervous complaint, which caused him for about four years almost unendurable sufferings. Yet great as his sufferings were, God strengthened him and granted him a victorious faith, in which he died calmly.

“ Shortly before his final departure, he said : ‘ I have examined myself, and through the blood of Christ I see my way open to heaven.’ Subsequently he was so abundantly blessed and strengthened, that he said to his family, he could scarce wait for the time of his dissolution, but would soon go to heaven, requesting them to tell this to his brethren and sisters, and to all men. Thus departed this just and pious man in the faith and firm hope of a blessed immortality.

“ Bro. Focht was converted about 25 years ago, through the instrumentality of our preachers, joined the Church, and was for the greater part of his subsequent life a local preacher, which office he filled with great zeal and faithfulness, to the conversion of many souls and the edification of the children of God.”

#### § 245. A Quiet Conference Year.

The Annual Conferences of this year took place as follows : East Pa. Conference convened at Philadelphia, Feb. 26 : West Pa., at York, March 12 ; that of Ohio in Emanuel’s Church, Greenfield township, Fairfield Co., O., May 14th ; and that of Illinois at Des Plaines, Cook Co., Illinois, June 11th, which was its first session. Nine itinerants located, and thirteen were received on trial. Several of the circuits were divided, and others changed ; but only one new mission was started, viz.: at Albany, N. Y., excepting a few more by Illinois Conference.

Although the boundaries of the Association extended considerably during the year, and nearly 2300 new members were received, yet the net increase did not even amount to one hundred ! The loss of membership was greater than in any former year.

The East Pennsylvania Conference received 736 new members, and yet its increase only amounted to 43 ; the West Pennsylvania Conference

received 812 new members, and yet sustained a decrease of 91 members; that of Ohio had 486 new converts, and yet had a decrease of 15; while that of Illinois received but 224 new members, and had an increase of 160. However incredible this report may appear to some of our readers, it is nevertheless true, according to the protocols of the several conferences. It is, therefore, no wonder that the increase of the membership of the Association was so very slow.\*

Our views of the causes of these heavy annual losses we have already given; and as the evil still exists to some extent, the Annual Conferences ought to take it into consideration, in order to remedy it as far as possible. It can, indeed, not be expected that in a denomination enforcing Discipline and excluding the transgressors, the increase of membership should be as rapid as in those where this is done but to a limited extent or not at all; but notwithstanding this, the annual losses of the Evangelical Association are proportionately far too great.

Of extraordinary awakenings this year we have no information although nearly the usual number of new members was received. In the East Pa. Conference the circuits Northampton, Monroe and Leikens and the Albany mission had the best success. Awakenings also occurred in Weissport, Beachwood, Williams township and Springtown, and a considerable number of persons were saved.

In the West Pa. Conference, Columbia, Cumberland, York, Lycoming, Perry and Clarion circuits; and in the Ohio Conference, Wayne, Sandusky and Marion circuits, and Ann Arbor mission made the best progress so far as accessions were concerned.

Illinois Conference was in great want of ministers, and its extensive fields of labor could therefore be but sparingly supplied. Besides, it should be remembered that nearly all the ministers were inexperienced young men. This proved a serious impediment to the rapid extension of the work. Notwithstanding all this, new preaching places were established in new parts of the country and the boundaries considerably enlarged.

#### § 246. Renewed Discussions of Higher Education.

About this time a discussion arose in the *Christliche Botschafter* concerning the views of the Ev. Association with reference to an educated ministry caused by a communication from John Dreisbach under the heading: "*Teachers and Preachers Must Not Be Ignorant*," in which he favored a learned ministry, and encouraged such preachers and candidates for the ministry as received no proper school education, to be industrious in using the means for self-education. He did not hold that learning in the higher sense of the word was indispensable to the office of the ministry, but he

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\*) It must, however, be said that the statistics were at this time kept very imperfectly; and the emigration of many members from the East to the West caused confusion and losses.

admitted that it would not be detrimental, and that in connection with the divine call and unction it would be a great advantage and very much enhance the preacher's usefulness. He insisted particularly that the minister should fully master the languages he uses in preaching, etc.

Later this subject was again discussed in the paper, but not with the desired result, because the differences of opinion were yet too great, causing considerable friction.

Nevertheless the subject in question was thereby brought into public and private discussion, and some advance gained in the mind of the Church. One year afterward the West Pa. Conference formed itself into an Educational Society, for the purpose of procuring a library for the use of the Conference, and supporting pious, poor young men in their studies. Two years afterward the subject came up before General Conference which body took measures to establish a higher school of learning ("Pflanzschule"), which, however, was not carried out, yet it was a progressive movement. The prejudices and opposition to high schools in the Association gradually gave way, and many who had formerly been opposed now favored them.

The number of newly received members during this conference year was 2,258, but the increase only ninety-seven, and at the close of the year the whole number was 15,015.

#### § 247. A Year of Progress.

In 1846 the East Pa. Conference held its session in Schuylkill Haven, Pa., beginning on the 25th of February. Statistics were reported as follows: Newly converted 557, newly received 736, whole number 4790. The salary of a single preacher was \$56.16. One preacher located, and four were received into the itinerancy. Whit-Monday was appointed as a day of fasting and prayer for the preachers and members of this Conference.

The West Pa. Conference began its session on the 18th of March in New Berlin, Pa. Seven preachers located and nine were received into the itinerancy. The salary of a single preacher was \$48.84—certainly small enough. The Conference resolved "that it is inexpedient for our young preachers to marry or enter into a betrothal during the time of their probation,"—a good resolution.

The Conference also resolved that in their estimation it was "not advisable for our preachers and members to join any secret society or have fellowship with them." This resolution is well worthy of being renewed and complied with.

The Conference also formed itself into an "Educational Society" for the purpose of assisting each other in literary advancement. Further it was resolved that the 27th day of November be observed as a day of fasting and prayer during which there should be preaching in the morning and evening. This also might be frequently repeated with great spiritual

benefit. A committee was appointed to devise a plan for raising the sum of \$2000 for the mission church in Pittsburg.

Statistics : Newly converted 578, newly received 718, whole membership 5,109.

The Ohio Conference held its session in Thompson township, Seneca Co., Ohio, on the 13th of May. Four preachers located. The single preacher, received \$50.52. No statistics reported.

The Illinois Conference held its session in Germantown, Indiana, beginning June 10th. Statistics : Newly received 224, whole number of members 1208, salary of single preacher \$51.84. The Illinois Conference had an immense field of labor which extended over Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin, and as there were no railroads in this territory at that time, and the country roads were new and often impassable, the preachers traveled mostly on horseback. In those far famed "backwoods" and on those immense prairies they were subjected to many privations, difficulties, and hardships. But they pressed forward courageously and celebrated many victories in the log-cabins and sod-houses of the righteous.

The various reports show that the work in general made considerable progress in 1846. The Conferences were well disposed toward each other and would in cases of necessity lend a helping hand. When, for instance, the West Pa. Conference appointed a committee to devise a plan for raising \$2000 for the distressed Church in Pittsburg, the Ohio Conference took hold of this matter, and even the distant and yet young Illinois Conference resolved that each presiding elder should collect \$20 on his district for said church.

Considerable interest was manifested in the proposed meeting of the "Evangelical Alliance" in London, England, to be held on the 19th of August, 1846. Father John Dreisbach was appointed delegate to represent the Association, but he was not able to undertake the journey on account of bodily infirmities.

The "camp-meeting spirit" was at this time very active in the Church. In a few issues of the *Botschafter*, thirty-five announcements of proposed camp-meetings appeared. In several communications it was urged upon preachers and members to prepare themselves for these meetings by fasting and prayer. There was a *holy earnestness* in this matter. According to reports a great number of "fishes" were caught with the net of the Gospel at these meetings. At several meetings as many as 50 persons professed conversion.

The cause of missions made somewhat slow but sure progress. The annual report of the society enumerates 16 missions, as follows : New York, Syracuse, Albany, Lancaster, Reading, Pittsburg, Cleveland, Sandusky, Ann Arbor, Dayton, Chicago, St. Mary's, Iowa, Madison, Racine, Milwaukee. The motto of the Evangelical Association was : *Forward!*

**§ 248. Conference Sessions.—Resolutions Against Secret Societies.**

In 1847 the East Pa. Conference held its session in Fayette, Seneca County, New York, beginning February. The statistical report exhibited the following items : newly-converted 519, newly-received 636, whole number of members 4,900. The salary of a single minister was \$56.76.

Bishop Joseph Long, Henry Fischer, and Francis Hoffman were appointed a committee to formulate and report a resolution concerning secret societies, and they reported that the General Conference be requested to introduce a law into the discipline prohibiting our preachers and members from joining secret societies ; also " that this Conference advises the preachers and members to join no society whose organization makes it necessary to fellowship with worldly men and participate in their foolish performances, because this is in conflict with the word of God, causes much offence, and is unseemly and dangerous for Christians." In this matter the trumpet gave no uncertain sound.

The West Pa. Conference convened March 17th, in North Middleton, Cumberland County, Pa. The statistical report gives newly-converted 722, newly-received 812, whole membership 5,152. The single preacher received \$52.56; still sufficient to keep him at least outwardly humble !—The Conference again adopted a resolution concerning secret societies, this time defining what they understood by this designation, viz. : " All societies which transact their private business behind locked doors and guards, keep them secret under solemn oaths, and use secret signs by which they recognize each other."

The resolutions of the two eastern conferences regarding secret societies certainly were a sign of the times in that part of the Church which indicated much more than was expressed directly ! But we can only approve of the solicitude and vigilance of these watchmen on the walls of Zion.—During this session the previously-formed Educational Society completed its organization by the adoption of a constitution and the election of officers.

The Ohio Conference met May 12, at Manchester, Summit County, Ohio. The statistical report shows, newly-received 403, whole membership 3,257. Salary of a single preacher \$56.52. Eleven brethren were received into the itinerancy and two located.—The *mind* of the Church concerning oath-bound secret societies, as for instance Free-masons, about this time found its strongest expression in an out-spoken resolution of this Conference with reference to one of their members, as follows : " *Resolved*, That (N. N.) shall withdraw from the order of Free-masons and procure a certificate of dismissal from them, which shall then be published ; in case this is not accomplished, he can no longer serve as preacher among us. But should he not be able to obtain said certificate, the Conference requires the testimony of two men appointed for this purpose that he has withdrawn,

for the purpose of publication." This was rigorously carried out by the two appointees upon which (N. N.) remained in the ministry. Whether this transaction was legal may be a question, but it was certainly not wanting in definiteness as to the sentiment and practice of this Conference.

The session of the Illinois Conference took place in Naperville, Illinois, on the 9th of June. 359 newly-received members were reported; the single preacher received \$77.16. This was regarded as a considerable advance in salary, especially commendable in view of the fact that this was the pioneer and frontier Conference. It extended its operations rapidly into Iowa and still further into Wisconsin, and thus spread itself over four States, viz.: Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa. But "there was still much more land to be occupied."

*Thirty-six* camp-meetings were announced this year and more than this number were held. At that time the preaching at such meetings was concentrated upon repentance, conversion, and sanctification. The purpose was to get *into the hearts* of men with the word of God, to which the divine blessing was added and the word did not return void, but accomplished that unto which it was sent. Hence there followed many awakenings and conversions, and the reports of them were very cheering. This stirred up considerable jealousy and opposition, which was specially manifested by several religious (?) papers who denounced and glaringly misrepresented these meetings; but the then editor of the *Botschafter* (Adam Ettinger) defended them vigorously and skillfully.

#### § 249. Another Controversy on Classical Education.

A controversy arose during this Conference year concerning classical education, higher institutions of learning, etc., in the *Botschafter*, in which, however, all the participants agreed that such an education was good and desirable for a minister, but the views differed with reference to the means and manner by which to secure it. It was feared chiefly that the advocates of such education intended to introduce *theological schools*—so-called "preacher-factories"—which were vehemently denounced, but no one had such an object in view at that time. By this controversy, however, the subject was brought more fully before the Church and into the light. A very decided intention was expressed that the Church would cling to the old evangelical land-mark: that the call and fitness for the ministerial office must come from God, but that the preacher must also use all diligence and appropriate means in his power to become well-informed in scientific and literary respects, for the better administration of his office, in accordance with the expression of the previous General Conference.

#### § 250. A Very Business-like General Conference.

The *ninth* session of General Conference commenced on the 29th day of September, 1847, in New Berlin, Pa. There were 41 delegates present.

The general statistics yielded the following results : Preachers 319, members 14,871, a gain during four years of 1801 members. The loss of members was much larger than the latter number which may have been caused chiefly by emigration from the East to the West, where they were very often not reached by our preachers, besides the statistical reports were often very defective.

This Conference adopted the recommendation by the annual conferences that a preacher on probation in the itinerancy be not allowed to marry during his probation. This is a wise law. A probationary preacher needs all his time and the use of his powers in study and general preparation for the high office of the ministry, in order to a thorough test of his ability and call before he can be advanced to holy orders.

It was also ordered that every preacher be diligent in establishing Sunday-schools (especially German) wherever practicable. The paranthetical restriction was, however, expunged in later years, because it led to great difficulties and embarrassments.

The Conference adopted a rule that the vote be taken *vive voce* instead of by rising as was done previously.

The editor of the *Botschafter* and the agent of the Publishing House (Ettinger and Reisner) were placed under charges for having lived in discord during their official term, and after an investigation, which lasted during several days, it was resolved that they be deprived of membership in this Conference, that they be required to settle their difficulties peaceably, and shall not be eligible for re-election to their respective offices at this session.

#### § 251. Resolutions Concerning High Schools.

A resolution was adopted that this Conference does not favor *theological schools*—called “preachers-factories,” in common parlance. The somewhat vehement discussion on classical education which had taken place shortly before the session of this Conference, and in which several writers took positions too far in advance of the sentiment of the Church, was followed by a re-action; this was very likely the reason for this somewhat remarkable resolution.\*

Now Father John Dreisbach surprised the Conference by offering the following resolution :—

“Resolved, That a seminary for general sciences be established in the Evangelical Association with the consent of the majority of the members, connected with manual labor by the pupils, in order thereby to defray the expenses of tuition, board, etc., with the understanding that thereby no

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\*) Rev. William W. Orwig, who had been for several years the pioneer leader in the cause of higher education, and had used some strong expressions during the said discussion, was the mover of the above resolution, thereby indicating that he was not in favor of the dreaded “preachers-factories.”

so-called 'preachers-factory' (theological school) is intended, and it is expressly stipulated that it shall never be used for such a purpose, because according to our view, the preparation and sending out of evangelical preachers is the work of God. Nevertheless we believe that it is our duty to put forth our efforts that the Evangelical Association may become enriched in the manifold branches of knowledge, which is without question very beneficial to every Christian and preacher and will be helpful to us in obtaining a correct knowledge of God and ourselves, and will render the Holy Scriptures more edifying to us."

This motion was adopted and a vote of the entire Church-membership on this subject was ordered. Then it was further

"*Resolved*, That our Bishops and John Dreisbach be a standing committee—in case the Evangelical Association gives a favorable expression and the erection of the proposed seminary appears practicable—to report these facts to the annual conferences, whereupon each Conference shall elect a director for the accomplishment of this object." And further it was

"*Resolved*, That every preacher in charge shall in each class of his charge hold an election during the Conference year at which our friends shall declare whether they be in favor of such a school or not; this election shall be duly announced, and every member shall have the privilege of voting."

The work in the State of New York and Canada—excepting the city of New York—was formed into a new Conference and called "New York Conference."

It was also resolved that the annual salary of the editors and the managing agent be \$225, and that each child under 14 years shall receive \$15! In view of the fact that these officers had to work almost day and night, thereby impairing their health, this was indeed a pitiable salary, but the idea then prevailed that the preachers laboring in the Publishing House should be as nearly as possible on an equality with those on circuits, in the matter of salary.

#### § 252. The Publication of the Evangelical Messenger Ordered.

As many of the younger members of the Church could not read German, and several fields of labor consisted almost entirely of English speaking members the want of an English Church paper was felt very keenly, hence it was resolved by this Conference: that such a paper be published and be named, "*The Evangelical Messenger*." It was to appear semi-monthly and be issued as soon as 800 subscribers should be secured—if possible to commence with the 8th of January, 1848. Since the Church had such splendid success with the *Christliche Botschafter*, and as the Publishing House was free of debt, there was no hesitation in undertaking this additional enterprise.

A resolution was adopted that a Conference having 20 English preachers should be permitted to organize an English Conference, which was to have equal rights with the other Conferences. From these transactions all see clearly that the English work was not to be treated as a "step-child," but enjoy equal rights with the German. The English portion of the Church already had the Discipline, a hymn-book, and now also a prospective Church paper, and permission to organize English Conferences enjoying in all respects equal privileges, although the Germans were largely in the majority, and had in some respects to assist the English brethren. These facts are highly significant.

#### § 253. Election of Bishops and Editors.

John Seybert and Joseph Long were again elected Bishops. Concerning this election Bishop Seybert wrote the following notice into his diary :—

"Today, October 22, 1847, Conference attended to the election of General Superintendents, and again two Bishops were elected for the four ensuing years, namely Joseph Long and John Seybert; thus this, to me, unspeakably important office has been imposed upon me again—and this was done in the afternoon at about four o'clock. O Lord, help! O Lord, send prosperity! Amen."

Nicholas Gehr of the Ohio Conference was elected editor of both *Botschafter* and *Messenger*, and Henry Fischer of the East Pa. Conference, managing agent of the Publishing House. Adam Ettinger was commissioned to continue and complete the compilation of the History of the Evangelical Association commenced by John Dreisbach.

#### § 254. Class-meetings.

This Conference also adopted the rule which makes it the duty of the classleader to "hold class-meeting at least once every four weeks." But this class-meeting as the fathers and law-makers understood it, does not mean to hold a prayer-meeting, it means *an examination* of the class, as the Discipline clearly teaches, at which the leader calls upon each member by name to tell to the class what his spiritual condition is, whether progress is being made in grace, upon which the leader imparts such admonitions as seem necessary and suitable to him for the promotion of spiritual life. These evangelical class-meetings, in the primitive time of the Church, were held much oftener than once in four weeks, and were always very edifying and inciting.

The itinerant preachers also, especially those in charge, held such class-meetings. This was often done without previous notice at the close of a brief sermon, in accordance with a direction in the Discipline, that he also hold class-examinations four times a year in each class. Lukewarm and indifferent members, however, did not relish this; they were almost

frightened, for in those earlier times of the Church it was impossible to escape a closer examination by a few general phrases; the preacher endeavored to get to the bottom of the spiritual status of the members, and his questions were frequently similar to a cross-examination in a civil court. Many persons who had relapsed into spiritual drowsiness would thereby be aroused and were "fired up" again, as the saying then was current. Zealous Christians greatly appreciated these meetings, they served generally as a blessed means of grace. No class-meeting passed without tears of penitence and also of joy, and not infrequently the praises of God arose from heart and tongue for the great things God was doing among his people. The preachers themselves realized great benefit, they would thereby become better acquainted with the spiritual condition of their members, and were thus enabled to prepare their sermons and direct their pastoral labors accordingly. These rules are still in the Discipline—but how is it with regard to their observance by class-leaders and preachers?\*

#### § 255. Against Secret Societies.

Several motions concerning secret societies were discussed by this General Conference, which, however, were finally all laid upon the table. The request made by the East Pa. Conference that a law be passed prohibiting our preachers and members from joining such societies had not come before this Conference in the order prescribed in the Discipline, and hence could not be acted upon. However, the general and prevailing sentiment in this Conference and throughout the Church was against such societies. Most of the preachers and members who belonged to such organizations before their conversion, withdrew from them and warned others against joining them. The same sentiment has been observed to be predominant in our and other Churches when and where spirituality prevails.

This session was closed according to the record as follows: The members of Conference signed their names, thereby signifying their approval of the transactions of this session:

Joseph Long, John Seybert, William W. Orwig, Francis Hoffmann, John G. Zinser, Absalom B. Schaefer, Philip Wagner, John P. Leib, Joseph M. Saylor, Henry Fischer, Michael Eis, David Fischer, Jacob Kehr, Frederick Danner, Christian Hummel, Michael Lehn, William Münz, Jacob Boas, Charles Hammer, Henry Rohland, James Dunlap, George Brickley,

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\*) In those years when class-meetings were held regularly and conscientiously, a great outcry was raised against them by some opponents of the Evangelical Association, asserting that such meetings were in principle related to auricular confession in the Roman Catholic Church! What folly! Auricular confession is held secretly, it is often a shameful espionage, when the inquiring priest sneakily enters into the particulars of married life and the secrets of the family; but class-meetings were held publicly and the inquiry concerned exclusively the present state of personal religion and spiritual experience.

Alexander Langsdorf, Daniel N. Long, Daniel Kehr, Jacob Barber, Henry Langbrecht, John M. Sindlinger, Abraham Loehner, Aaron Yambert, Abraham Niebel, John J. Kopp, John Nikolai, John Dreisbach, John Hall, John Erb, Henry Niebel, Elias Stöver, Louis Einsel, John Bernhart, John G. Müller, George A. Blank, Samuel Baumgartner.

§ 256. Extension and Progress of the Work in 1848.

We insert a synoptical report of the work in the East by the untiring Bishop Seybert, as follows :

"Since General Conference I traveled over a great portion of the West Pa. and East Pa. Conference districts. We had generally blessed meetings and much edification in private conversation and worship with the friends. In the sections of Loyalsack, Blockhouse, Clinton and Center circuits there was much weeping and shouting of God's praises in our meetings, as also in Baltimore and on York circuit. In the East Pa. Conference during Summer and Autumn a great dearth prevailed, but in the latter part of December the Lord had mercy on us and visited this part of his vine-yard with refreshing and saving showers of salvation, so that glorious awakenings and revivals took place, especially in Lancaster, Lebanon, Berks, Lehigh, and Carbon Counties, and also in Philadelphia, New York, Reading, Lebanon, Orwigsburg, etc. The ministerial brethren also found entrance in several regions where the people to a great extent had been sitting in moral darkness, sunken in errors and iniquities—there are now good prospects for conversions. A specially blessed work took place recently in the neighborhood of Kutztown, in Berks County, where a good foundation has already been laid by deep, solid conversions, in consequence of which the enemy of souls rages furiously through his servants. For twenty years we have endeavored to press into this place with the truth, but every time when the word seemed to have taken root the opposition by unconverted ministers and their adherents destroyed it again, and the witnesses of the truth were driven off, yet at last the answer to the prayer of God's people came, his 'mighty arm did valiantly,' hearts and houses were opened, and the way prepared for the truth. Since the sessions of our Eastern Conferences I have traveled over Clinton and Center circuits and enjoyed blessed seasons with the friends. I am now on my way to the West, well in body and full of courage to work with my brethren in promoting God's cause in my office and calling. Soon I expect, the Lord permitting, to enjoy myself in the far West upon the green plains and flowery prairies with the saints in their poor cabins !"

Bro. Absalom B. Schaefer reported good progress, and many conversions and also great want of preachers, in order to meet the many calls on his large district in the Illinois Conference. Similar reports of victories came in from other parts of the Church.

**§ 257. Conference Sessions—Organization of the New York Conference.**

The East Pa. Conference held its session at Allentown, Pa., February 28th, 1848, with Bishop Seybert in the chair. Five preachers located and four were newly-received on probation. The statistics reported: newly converted 703, newly received 1,041, and on the whole 5,169 members. The salary of a single preacher was \$54.72. At this session the New York Conference was organized. The separation of itinerant ministers, who had labored together so long, was very touching.

The session of the West Pa. Conference was held at Millheim, Pa., March 15, with Bishop Seybert presiding. A new mission was established in Baltimore (Oldtown.) The editor of the *Botschafter*, who attended the session, reported that much zeal and activity in the work of the Lord was manifested in this Conference. Statistical report: newly-converted 800, newly-received 954, whole membership 5,352. Four brethren were received into the itinerancy on probation. The salary of the single preacher was \$51.84.

The Ohio Conference met May 10th, at Milton, Stark County, Ohio. Both bishops were present. Five brethren were received into the itinerancy on probation. The salary of a single preacher was \$41.10 not a dollar per week! And still they preached almost daily, *and labored courageously on!* The statistics were as follows: newly-converted 347, newly-received 494, whole membership 3,908. This Conference adopted strong resolutions with regard to procuring parsonages.

The Illinois Conference went into session June 14th, in Cook County, Illinois, with Bishop Seybert in the chair. The great Indiana district was divided; the northern part was called St. Joseph and the southern part Wabash district. Four new missions were established and four preachers received into the itinerancy on probation. Newly converted 292, newly received 551, whole membership 1,980. The salary of a single preacher was \$65.16—somewhat more than in the older eastern conferences. Bishop Long sent the Conference a present of ten copies of a grammar for which the brethren thanked him heartily. Here the motto was—"be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

The preceding figures and items may at a superficial glance appear unimportant and of little interest, but they represent a thousand efforts, hardships, tears, and struggles, and yet also many glorious victories and joyful seasons on account of the hundreds of conversions. All—all will be found accurately recorded in the books which shall be opened in the great Day of Judgment!

**§ 258. The Cause of Missions.**

This good cause made considerable progress in the several annual conferences, but it became gradually a *Conference cause* instead of being a general co-operative work as was originally intended. The Parent Society was al-

most left without work, because the Conferences both established the missions and paid their missionaries. The Society had no General Board in which the Conferences were represented, and there was as yet no European or other foreign mission established, requiring united support; the income of the Society had dwindled down to almost nothing. In course of time the Conferences became practically independent of each other, and thus matters went on until several of them had drifted deeply into debt. The admonitions of the Parent Society also remained unheeded until about ten years later *imperative necessity* commanded both *attention* and *reformation* in this matter.

**§ 259. Unfavorable Result of the Vote concerning the Proposed Seminary.**

The vote of the members ordered by the General Conference on the Seminary project resulted unfavorably to the school. The chief causes were the following:—

1.—This project was discussed very little in the Church papers. Besides Bishop Long and a few anonymous correspondents no one wrote upon it.

2.—The needed detailed arrangements for getting out and taking the vote had been neglected.

3.—No specified time—for instance a certain month—was appointed and the election was not held everywhere.

4.—The Church in general and a large portion of the ministers were not yet ripe for such an enterprise.

5.—By a keen discussion of the cause of higher schools which took place sometime before in the *Botschafter*, fears were created that the matter was being pushed upon dangerous grounds—hence about one-half of the members did not vote at all, and many preferred voting against it rather than in its favor.

It was a pity that this promising project failed at that time. Bishop Long was much grieved over the result, as was Father Dreisbach, the originator of it. But the cause of education did not stop on this account as we shall see hereafter. It was only retarded.

**§ 260. Portentous Beginning of the Year 1849.**

Already in the latter part of 1848 it was observed that the editor of the *Christliche Botschafter* and the *Evangelical Messenger*, Nicholas Gehr, did not agree with the established doctrine of the Church on Christian Perfection, and that in other respects he was not so strictly “evangelical”, as was expected of an editor of the Church papers. In the Spring of 1849 this tendency of the editor quite unexpectedly culminated in his resignation of the editorship, his withdrawal from the Church and subsequent entrance into the German Reformed Church. Thereby the Publishing House was placed in a very unpleasant predicament. Bro. Henry Fischer, the

managing agent, had to attend immediately to the editing of both papers, until the Board could be called together, which then appointed John G. Zinser as editor of the *Botschafter*. He, however, found it necessary to decline the appointment. After this William W. Orwig was again called to the editorship.

Fortunately both papers appeared regularly during the interval, because the venerable proof-reader, Bro. William Bersch, who possessed considerable literary ability and was a faithful servant of the Church, acted as assistant editor, and thus was a great help in time of need until all wants could again be supplied. Thus this unpleasant episode was passed over, and, in spite of all, the papers made good progress.

### § 261. Conference Sessions.

The session of the East Pa. Conference commenced March 7th, 1849, in Reading, Pa., with Bishop Long in the chair. One of the old preachers, John C. Reisner, had to be deposed from the ministry on account of immoral conduct, which caused much grief and sorrow in the Conference. The venerable Bishop especially was deeply pained by the sad affair. Bro. Jacob Schnerr, who was highly respected and beloved, died happy in the Lord while the Conference was in session, the news of which also deeply affected this body, though in a greatly different manner. Harrisburg and Tamaqua were taken up as missions. The salary of the preachers after deducting traveling expenses amounted to from \$79 to \$100. Membership was reported as follows: Newly converted 530, newly received 620, whole number 5,904.

The West Pa. Conference commenced its session March 13th, at Logansville, Pa., with Bishop Long in the chair. The salary averaged \$77. A recommendation to General Conference was adopted prohibiting "the wearing of veils". A committee of three was appointed to "adopt measures to organize a Sunday School Union in the Evangelical Association." Five brethren were received into the itinerancy. No statistical report was published.

The New York Conference held its *first* session beginning April 25th, 1849, in Buffalo, N. Y., Bishop Long presiding. The statistical report is as follows: Newly converted 304, newly received 422, whole number 1,837. Salary of a single preacher after deducting traveling expenses \$62.52. The missions in Albany and Rochester made encouraging progress. Four brethren were received into the itinerancy. The prospects of the Conference were considered promising.

The Ohio Conference assembled in Walnut, Pickaway County, Ohio, May 16th, Bishop Seybert presiding. The statistical report contained the following items: Newly converted 596, newly received 461, whole number 4,147. Seven brethren were received into the itinerancy, and three located. The preachers of this Conference had no prospects for riches, honor or days

of pleasure, but hardships, privations, trials and severe work stared them in the face, yet, the record states, when they closed their session, "the brethren took their departure, standing in a circle shaking hands with each other amidst many tears of brotherly love, singing songs of praise and they seemed without exception to receive their allotments of work joyfully and with good courage." *What an example of heroism!*

The Illinois Conference held its session at Naperville, Ill., commencing June 20th, Bishop Seybert presiding. Two brethren were received on probation, and two took a local relation. The membership was reported as follows: Newly converted 454, newly received 637, whole number 2,613. The salary of a single preacher was \$62.16. Three new missions were taken up. At the close of the session the record says: "Deeply moved we gave each other the parting hand; united in spirit to live or die in the cause of the Lord each one hastened to his appointment." And God was with them.

In these years the conferences were usually closed in this manner. The brethren took their departure from Conference with their hearts full of fervent brotherly love, inspired with fresh courage and re-invigorated for the difficulties and trials of moving with their families when they were changed from one field to another—which was often the case—at a time when there were no railroads and when they were compelled to live on empty purses, their only passion being *that sinners might be led to the Saviour and the work of the Lord be promoted!*

#### § 262. Many Camp-meetings.

The reports from camp-meetings at this time testify of glorious progress, many conversions and also efforts to extend the work. To "secure new appointments" and make conquests was the prominent characteristic of those days in the Church. Thirty-five camp-meetings were announced in the year, but still more were held.

It was quite difficult to compile statistics that were even approximately correct, chiefly on account of many changes of boundaries, and very many removals of members from the East to the West, the immense territory of which was rapidly opened for settlement. We have been unable for several years to give full statistics, but according to the conference statistics of 1849 the whole membership amounted to about 20,000.

#### § 263. Conversion of John Walz.

As a remarkable instance of the nature and genuineness of the great majority of conversions in the Evangelical Association about this time, we insert a brief description of the conversion of Rev. John Walz. Bro. Walz is well known in the entire Association as a useful preacher of the Gospel, as missionary in Europe since 1864, where he has served a number of years as presiding elder, and as successful manager of the Publishing House of the Church in Stuttgart, Wuerttemberg.

In the Summer of 1849 John Walz, then a young man, came from Wuerttemberg, Germany, and after a long and difficult voyage arrived in Erie, Pennsylvania. How he was there led to the Lord we permit him to tell, as follows :

On the Sunday after his arrival he went to a church to hear parson St. preach. The Gospel for the day was read, followed by singing and prayer and the announcement of the text, viz. "Offer unto God thanksgiving and pay thy vows unto the Most High." Psalm 50, 14. Upon this he said to himself: "You are the ungrateful one who does not pay his vows." But the impression was only superficial, and on his return from the church it had already passed away. For two months he lived on in sin again. The saloon was visited almost every evening and on Sunday with even greater frequency. It was frequently told him that fresh immigrants who had arrived in the hot season must drink brandy, in order to prevent cholera and dysentery. He believed this falsehood and was thereby induced to drink frequently.

After two months he had a dispute with his employer and left him. He found another, Conrad Doll, a member of the Evangelical Association. When he told his comrades, whom he met in the saloon, they exclaimed: "Hoh! you will yet join the fanatics! You will soon fall away from the faith!" "Well, what is the matter with that man," inquired Walz. "Why, he has already induced many of his workmen to deny their faith! He belongs to a sect, who scream, groan, jump, dance, and fall into each others arms in the church! They are the most infamous people under the sun!" was the remarkable answer. Walz was for some minutes at a loss to know what to say to this; at last he remarked: "Then it seems they have no God of order but of disorder. How then is that man in his every-day life?" Upon this an elderly man replied: "In this respect Mr. Doll is blameless; I have known him for a long time, he defrauds no one, you are sure to get your pay if you work for him." "Well, I regard it as being very disgraceful to break a promise. I will go there. What do I care about his religion; I will take care of myself, I will not fall away from the faith."

At that time Walz in common with many others entertained the erroneous view that the act of joining another Christian denomination was a falling away from the faith. But this may be done without having any saving faith. "Falling away from true faith" in God can only take place when a union with Him has existed, namely when by faith he dwells in us and we then forsake him by sinning.

Mr. Walz now began to work for Bro. Doll in the shoe business. He soon asked his employer: "What sort of worship do you have? I hear that you scream," etc. Mr. Doll smiled and said, "We have a meeting for worship to-morrow evening, then you had better come along and see for yourself." In the evening when the clock had struck nine Mr. Doll said to

his workmen, "Now, come in," meaning thereby that they should come from the work-shop into the sitting room. He went in himself and some of the employes followed. Walz, however, said: "That does not mean me, for I have nothing to do in that room?" Whereupon one of the men, Mr. Hampe, said: "Yes, you are to come, too." Then he went in, too—each one then stood up and they began to sing an evening hymn. After singing they knelt down and Hampe commenced to pray from the heart. But Walz stood there astounded, "What is this?" he thought, "are these people Catholics? Such a thing I have not seen in my life! If they are Catholics, then you as a Lutheran must not kneel with them." Thus he struggled inwardly until the prayer was nearly finished; finally he thought he might kneel for once, for nobody would see him except these people, and when he would find out that they were Catholics, then he would kneel no more. In the morning before breakfast a chapter in the Bible was read, and Mr. Doll prayed.

The evening when the meeting was to be held came on, and Walz was invited to come along, which he did. The singing, prayer and the sermon pleased him well, but during the prayer after preaching loud voices were heard here and there, saying: "Amen! Praise the Lord! Lord grant it!" An elderly woman especially displeased him, for whenever she said "Amen," he felt a thrill going through his body, so that he became afraid. "This ought not to be so," he thought, "for the Bible says: Be silent before the Lord." It seemed to him such worship was not in accordance with the Bible, for he believed that those words were to be understood literally, and forgot that the primitive Christians themselves were not altogether silent in their worship.

While at work in the shop there was much conversation concerning the experience of religion. Mr. Hampe especially delighted in this, and frequently brought Walz into a tight place, from which the latter labored to escape. At last he thought: "Well, I was not a blockhead in school either, I can also learn these prayers, then I will be as good as they are." But he knew not himself and supposed he lacked nothing but committing these prayers to memory, but the more he paid attention to these things the more he was wrought upon, and he soon ascertained also that these prayers were not always the same. Now he seemed to wake up and began to say the prayers again, which his mother had taught him in his childhood. But how miserably he began to feel now! He realized that he could not pray the Lord's prayer and keep his thoughts fixed upon God. He would repeatedly try even for hours, but failed; worldly and evil thoughts would rush in upon him. "Oh," he groaned, "I am the most wretched being; if I only were like these people! Soon after this the biography of Michael Hahn fell into his hands, which he read again and again, especially that part which describes his conversion. "Oh, how re-

markable is this!" he exclaimed, "O God if such an experience is possible let me also realize it!"

At one time on Saturday evening he had thought of going to the saloon when Mr. Doll said to him pleasantly: "Will you go to Church this evening, Mr. Apothecary?" This set Walz to thinking that he had better go to Church than to the saloon. The text was: "He hath filled the hungry with good things and the rich he hath sent empty away." Luke 1, 53. He had peculiar feelings whilst these words were expounded. Alternately he felt hot and cold, sometimes he thought somebody was pulling him upward by his hair. He could not understand this, and actually looked toward the stove, thinking that the fire might be the cause of this, or else there might be a severe cold working in his physical system.

At the close of the meeting, they shook hands with each other while chatting and smiling in a most friendly manner. "Ah," he said to himself, "the preacher has spoken so sharply and yet these people can smile!" Tears came into his eyes, but he hastened away from the Church, so that no one should see him weeping, believing that it was unmanly for a young man to be found weeping. On his way home he had a clear conviction and felt deeply that he was a sinner.

Never before did he have such a knowledge of sin. "O how unhappy am I," he said, "while tears rolled down his cheeks; with these people I have no enjoyment and with the world neither. I am the most unfortunate man under the sun; why am I not a beast or a vegetable—why a human being to be so unhappy?" Filled with such thoughts and feelings he reached the house and retired, but no sleep came to his eyes. Morning came and the sun came up on the horizon shining beautifully, but in his soul all was dark as night; no other light was there, but that which revealed to him his sinfulness and impurity. It seemed to him that everything around him was mourning, and his appetite had left him.

When the time for Church service arrived on Sunday morning Mr. Hampe said to him: "Come with me to Church, we celebrate the Lord's Supper, and you may then see how we do this." "No," he replied, "I'll go to your Church no more—you have at times such a cold and then again such a hot fire. I'll go to *my* Church"—and so he did. The parson preached on the text John 2, 1-11. In the course of his remarks he said among other things:

"We Germans need not keep the Sabbath-day holy as the Americans and Puritans do; we may go to the tavern and drink one or two glasses of beer, only so that we don't become intoxicated, and swear, and fight. Look back to Moses' times—where it is said: 'Sell your clothes and buy strong drink,' look here into the Gospel where we read: 'Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk then that which is worse.' It is said in the newspapers nowadays that alcohol might be called a devil, but I might call him a devil who says this of alcohol."

When Walz heard this he thought: "We Germans are under the same obligation to keep the Sabbath-day holy as the English people are, and this man is a priest who leads us on to hell. The command: 'Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy,' is also intended for us."

Church being out, Mr. Walz was afraid to go back to the house. He knew that the Evangelical preacher would be there with other members from the country. He felt himself unworthy to be in their company, and thought they could see what a great sinner he was. A great change had come over him. Before this he deemed himself as good as the best among them and even much better than some who belonged to them. When they were happy he thought it was not proper for persons who wanted to be such good Christians. He harbored the erroneous idea that a true Christian may not be joyful but must always look downcast—and yet they are exhorted: "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice." He who hath forgiveness of sins may indeed rejoice, for there is life and happiness.

Since he had become awakened he thought highly of those who professed pardon of their sins, and although some of them regarded him as a selfrighteous pharisee, yet he defended them before the world when falsehoods were uttered against them. Thus he came to occupy a middle position. Some Christians regarded him as a pharisee and the children of the world called him a *Methodist*. (There were however, no German Methodists in Erie but the Evangelical members were thus designated.) Mr. Walz did not go home, but went to the saloon, in order to get rid of his sorrow; but this sadness went with him and whilst his comrades laughingly emptied one glass after the other, he sat meditatively in a quiet corner. Suddenly some one exclaimed: "Look—there sits Walz, how sad he looks—soon he will be a Methodist!" He could not hide his tears and left the room sighing: "Oh, that I had a good heart!"

He now called upon one of his countrymen and had scarcely entered his house when he was asked: "I hope you won't go to these people?" "I cannot tell," he replied. Never before had he given such an answer when he was questioned, he would always say, "That will never happen." "O, don't do that," it was now said, "it would be a disgrace for the whole family if you fall away from the faith; you will be despised and suffer great damage; when you start a business for yourself no one will buy anything of you. Yea, your sainted mother's bones will turn in the grave! O, don't disturb her, you cannot answer for it in the Day of Judgment." He remained silent, took hold of a Bible, read a little, but finding no rest, he left and entered into another house.

Here he found a gathering of different persons, who talked of whatever came uppermost until they touched also the Evangelical Association, when they attacked their doctrines and manner of worship. For some time he listened in silence, but when they said things against them which he knew

to be utterly false he arose and said: "You calumniate these people. Has any one of you seen or heard it of themselves what you are talking here? I am now four months among them, and have watched them closely, and I am convinced that they are better than we are. What you are talking about here is simply repeating hearsay, but it is false. Since I know them I have seen nothing of the kind. Of course they are no angels, but they are better than we are; they do not live in open sin, they pray in simplicity to God and often they come with illuminated faces from their closets, so that I am constrained to marvel at them; they are friendly and loving—and yet I cannot bear their looks. I tell you there is something in these people that we do not understand, however much we may blame them. What you say about their doctrines is also incorrect. I have been in their meetings and have had many conversations with them. I notice that they insist upon repentance, faith, regeneration, and good works, but not in the sense of thereby meriting heaven, but that by grace through faith in Christ we must be justified, and heaven also was given by grace. But if faith was of the right kind it would work by love, a faith that brings no good works would be a dead faith and could not save. And is not this precisely what the Holy Scriptures also teach? Read only the New Testament, and you will find it so. True, they teach also things that I do not understand, for instance, that a person who is born again and has become a child of God will know this by the witness of the Holy Spirit and his own life, and a man could not err in this when the Spirit bears witness with his spirit that he is a child of God. I have told them frequently that they only imagine these things, for the Spirit came only at the first pentecost upon men, but now he would not concern himself about them; but they refer me to Matthew 7. 16: "By their fruits ye shall know them", and Romans 8. 16: 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God.' That a man who deliberately lives in sin cannot be a regenerated man, we can all comprehend, but that the Spirit of God gives a man the assurance of his new birth we cannot understand. But our unbelief does not absolutely prove that it cannot be so. May there not be some things in religion that we do not understand?" Walz then further defended their mode of worship, kneeling in prayer, etc., which provoked some of those present to wrath. There was especially one woman who became quite angry and began to rail at him: "You fat Methodist—you will soon have screamed yourself lean; you will yet become a Methodist priest,—soon you will ride off on a white horse!" Thus she continued for awhile and finally leaped for anger. Walz remained silent, but it seemed remarkable to him that no one present found fault with the woman for jumping from sheer wrath, yet when praying people leap for joy they mock them as did Michal King David, and say they conduct themselves like vagabonds.

When Sunday evening came Walz desired to go to Church again, but

was afraid that the sermon might affect him so much that he could not refrain from weeping which appeared to him to be disgraceful. "What shall I do?" he asked himself. The thought then occurred to him that if a great crowd would be there, it would not affect him so much as if there were but few present. In haste he went around to houses and saloons where he was acquainted, inviting people to Church in this manner: "Come with me to the Evangelical Church, they are converting people, let us see how they conduct themselves"—and he got the Church pretty well-filled. The sermon affected him somewhat; at the close an invitation was given to such as were sorrowing on account of their sins, to come forward and kneel at the altar of prayer where friends would pray with them and point them to the Saviour for salvation from sin by faith in him. This he had never heard before and thought to himself: "Ye foolish people—whom will you get forward!" Suddenly the melting influence left him, and his heart became hard as stone. After worship was closed he went home resolving never to go to that Church again. On Monday evening he staid away, although his employer had said that the hands were excused from work—all might go to meeting. At the breakfast table next morning the preacher, Rev. John Nicolai, asked him: "Why did you not come to Church last night?" Walz answered: "I shall go no more into your Church." The preacher looked at him and smilingly said: "Yes, you will come again." At this Walz's eyes fell, he could look up no more, for it seemed to him the preacher could see into his wicked heart.

Next evening all went to meeting again, excepting Mr. Walz, and a Mr. K., who was a Catholic; they remained in the shop at their work. Neither of them disturbed the other by talking, nothing was heard, but the sounds of the hammer and the whizzing of the thread. Mr. Walz was considering plans how to get away quickly from this place, for he thought if he could leave this house he would obtain inward rest. Suddenly he broke this silence by saying: "I wish that the snow was not so deep, or that the lake was not frozen over, so that vessels could sail—to-morrow I would leave this place, for I cannot endure it longer here, my inward peace is entirely gone, and when I go to Church something thrills all my members and I feel as if somebody was lifting me up by the hair—I do not know, indeed, what this means." Upon this Mr. K. said: "It is just the same with me when I go to their Church, I do not understand at all what a Spirit that is." "Yes," said Walz, "but you are well off yet, at 9 o'clock you can go home to your family; but I have to stay here at meals and at family worship in the morning and evening. When we are called to the table then we have prayer first, so that one cannot get away—one is compelled to listen to it; the thing is unendurable—oh, that the vessels could sail!"

Mr. K. then went home and Walz being left alone, took up a New Testament which one of his converted comrades had left on the work-bench; on opening it his eyes fell on Acts 6, 5: "And the saying pleased the

whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost." Now his eyes were opened—"a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost, and you deny that the Holy Spirit operates upon man!"—a voice spoke within. Now he saw that the realization of his sins and repentance on account thereof was already an operation of the Holy Spirit. Oh, what a fearful sinner he now was! He began to feel the wrath of God upon his sins. At this instant the door opened and Mr. Hampe stepped in, having come back from the meeting. "What ails you, Walz?" he exclaimed, but he got no answer from W., who trembled all over his body. Hampe stepped into the room and Walz retired; as he went up the stairway he felt as if he was sinking into perdition. The words "where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth," came to his mind with great force. He already felt something of the worm that dieth not and of the fire that is not quenched. He went to bed and Hampe also came into the room. After the latter had silently prayed Walz said to him: "You people say always that you sin not, I will admit that you sin not in acts and words, but you do it in your thoughts," whereupon Hampe replied: "I cannot hinder birds from flying over my head, but I can prevent them from building a nest upon it." Mr. Walz now kept silence and Hampe exhorted him to turn to God and seek salvation from sin through Christ. This touched him deeply, his sins became to him exceedingly sinful. He could not refrain from weeping aloud, but he held the cover over his mouth, so that he might not be heard. The sins of his *thoughts* now appeared fearful to him and more numerous than the hairs on his head and the sands on the sea-shore. He saw that he had indeed deserved hell and his distress increased, he realized his great danger and his inability to escape from it. Finally he cried out: "O Saviour here I am, do with me as thou pleasest!" Suddenly his burden left him, the view of his sins vanished and he heard the inward voice: "Thy sins are forgiven thee." He now saw that Christ indeed had died for him, and he now felt such a strong and deep love for him, springing up in his heart that words could not express it. He felt that he must praise Him aloud but he held his mouth closed, but then the power of God lifted him up in his bed. Now he had a peace he never knew before and the Spirit of God bore witness with his Spirit that he was a child of God.

Now he possessed a peace of soul he never before knew and an intense longing sprang up in his heart that his acquaintances might also be saved and he formed the resolution, he would go to them and tell what the Lord had done for him, expecting that they then would believe also. This was a glorious night for him. But now came the tempter and insinuated: "Now you have religion, but tell it to nobody; your parson once preached we should not make much ado about it, but keep it in the heart, that was the right place," etc. He thought this was good doctrine—but when he arose in the morning his joy was so great that he exclaimed: "Now, Hampe, I

also have got religion !” The latter then told it at the breakfast table and they all rejoiced together that he had found this pearl of great price.

On the third day he sought his acquaintances and told them the wondrous doings of the Lord. Some of them looked at him with silent wonder, because they could not comprehend why he spoke thus joyfully about spiritual things ; others pitied him, considering it a great loss to him, that he was now going with those despised people. His former comrades endeavored several times to entice him into the saloon, but in vain, for he was steadfast and bore a clear, positive testimony against such places and gatherings. Being unsuccessful in this wise they began to persecute him by scoffing at him when on Sunday evenings he returned from worship in the Church. But they could not anger him nor scare him, he rejoiced in the reproach of Christ and pitied his persecutors, because he knew they were doing it in ignorance and unbelief.

#### § 264. Biographical Sketches.

Bro. Jacob Schnerr was born May 17, 1806, in Adams County, Pa. He was the child of poor, but honest parents. In his 12th year the Evangelical preachers came into his neighborhood, and he became enlightened and in his 22nd year, 1828, he was converted and soon afterward joined the Evangelical Association and soon his class,—Spring Mills—elected him exhorter. This office was to him a great responsibility, and he began to seek wisdom and grace by fasting and prayer, in order to become useful—and the future preacher began to be restless in him. Several circumstances connected with his call to preach are remarkable ; he relates the following : “ In the month of May, 1828, precisely one year after my conversion, Bro. Abraham Buchmann sent word to me, to come to his house, because a local preacher was holding a meeting there. I had to go 13 miles and came there on Saturday evening and stayed till Sunday afternoon. When I made ready for my return home Bro. Buchmann said I should yet tarry a little as he wanted first to go to his barn, from where he presently returned with a young horse. I thought he intended to accompany me part of the way, but then he led the fine, spirited animal to me, and said : ‘ Here, Bro. Schnerr, you have a horse, saddle and bridle—God wants you to preach the Gospel, and I know you haven’t got the means—here they are—and don’t you feel the call ? ’ I could not answer, but my eyes were filled with tears. Here this man of God stood and told me wonderful things, each word penetrated my soul, and my strength failed me. Finally I was helped on the waiting horse, I wept, and the aged servant of the Lord wept and—praised God ! Amidst the heartiest good wishes I left the place. But what a burden did I now feel ! Is it possible, I said to myself—that I shall preach the word of God ? But it had to be so—the call was too definite, so that I could not resist.” At the following Conference, in June, 1829, he was received into the itinerancy and appointed to York circuit.

In his first year he once made an appointment for a Sunday evening ; a large concourse of people gathered and the word made a deep impression. One man literally fell to the ground, together with six others, and all of them cried for mercy and five were happily converted to God. After Bro. Schnerr had served on several fields of labor with great success, he labored in 1832 and 1833 on the large Lebanon circuit and had several extensive revivals ; many souls were led to the Lord. He and his colleagues had much trouble with a fanatic named Keely, but in a short time "his occupation was gone."

Bro. Schnerr once preached in Newmanstown, near Womelsdorf, where an adherent of Keely was present, who frequently interrupted the preacher with insults. Bro. Schnerr suddenly stopped and said, as with a voice of thunder : "If this man D. says one word more before I am done, then the Almighty God has not sent me to preach the Gospel!"—and actually the scoffer was immediately silenced. First he looked at the preacher with astonishment, then he hung his head and his lips were closed until after the sermon was ended. This showed the strong courageous faith of this evangelical preacher.

Bro. Schnerr was also the first to commence the work in Philadelphia. On the 29th of November, 1833, he made his first visit there and sought out German people. He found entrance with a man named Roemer on Poplar Lane, only about 50 feet from the place where afterward the first church was built. The woman of the house at first refused to let him preach there, but after he had prayed with them, she consented. On that same evening he preached on the words : "What must I do to be saved?" After preaching he received an invitation to preach in another house also, which he did on the following evening—this was in the house of Mr. Gutbrod, who, with his wife were afterward for many years active and useful members of the Philadelphia Church. Another of the attendants of the meeting became so strongly attached to the plain unostentatious preacher that he took him into his house and entertained him. This was Father Wagner whose house remained from that time forward a home for the servants of God. This first visit lasted only a few days, but was so successful that the people arranged among themselves to hold prayer-meetings and began to think of building a church for Bro. Schnerr, if he would come again. On the 10th of December he made his second visit to the city, but could stay only a few days ; he preached twice with great power, and four souls were converted to God. On the 21st of January, 1834, and on the 25th of February he again visited Philadelphia, and the number of hearers and penitents increased until 14 persons were seeking salvation. He repeated his visit in the month of April. During the latter visit he preached nine times, organized a society with 30 members and administered the Lord's Supper to the new converts. Five visits and such success ! When on the last evening he held his farewell sermon the entire membership and

a number of seekers of salvation lay on their knees. The work had already obtained a strong foothold.

Bro. Schnerr and his colleagues had also great success in the counties of Lehigh, Berks, Lebanon, and in the town of Lebanon. After a year of much suffering Conference sent him to Philadelphia, which had been made a station. This then was the first station in the Evangelical Association and Bro. Schnerr was the first "*Station-preacher*." It was to him a great responsibility to accept this appointment, but trusting in God he undertook it and entered upon the work courageously. There was no lack of opposition, bitter enemies endeavored to hinder the work with all their might, but in spite of them the number of converts increased almost daily.

Among the remarkable conversions that took place two are specially notable. A woman, whose two daughters commenced seeking the Lord, while they called upon God for mercy in one of the meetings, came full of wrath into that meeting, intending to take her daughters away. While acting thus she suddenly sank to the floor, lost her strength and became speechless. She was then carried to her house, and in spite of all efforts of the physicians died in less than four hours. The daughters continued to seek the Lord until they found him to the joy of their hearts, when they learned to their great sorrow what happened to the mother. By this event deep conviction was wrought in many hearts and not a few learned to understand that it was a great risk to fight against God and his cause. Bro. Schnerr also found an open door in Germantown. The following year (1836) he had again surprising success in Philadelphia. Within a few months 40 persons were converted to God, and he wrote: "We can truly say: The Lord hath done great things whereof we are glad." He then inaugurated the first movement toward building a church in that city.

He served as itinerant preacher for about 10 years until 1838, when during his labors on Womelsdorf circuit he broke down. After that he lived 11 years, but was so feeble in body that he could rarely preach, yet he endeavored to be useful by other labors, as colporter, etc. He died on the 10th of March, 1849, being only in his 43rd year. When in the last hour he already looked beyond the bounds of time and space, he exclaimed: "I am clinging by faith to my Saviour—Satan, world, and death cannot harm me!"

One of the older preachers said of him: "Bro. Schnerr proved himself to be a zealous, powerful, and lively preacher. In his discourses he was quite simple, but penetrating. His chief aim was to save souls and hence he sought to show the sinner his miserable condition with much sympathy. He lifted up Christ in every sermon. The doctrines and discipline of the Evangelical Association, he defended vigorously, though he would not meddle with non-essentials. Fanatical people with their revelations found no access to him. On his fields of labor he was very much beloved, and wherever he went, he left a blessing." With another aged

minister we join in his prayerful wish : " May his consecration to God and devoted activity in his work serve as an impressive example to all our preachers and members ! "

Bro. Frederick L. Stoever was a young man of unusual talents. He made a blessed start in the ministry and much good was expected of him. We saw him at a camp-meeting, about a month before his decease, where he took a very active part in the work. It sometimes seemed as if the " glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ " which shone into his happy soul, illuminated his countenance, especially when he sang his favorite chorus : " Bald haben wir überwunden, dann geh'n wir in die Ruh' , " which turned out to be a prophecy for him that was soon after fulfilled. His preacher in charge, Rev. Frederick Kroecker, sent the following biography in the form of a letter to the editor of the *Christliche Botschafter*, dated September 17th, 1849 : " It is with feelings of deepest sorrow that I report the decease of my dear colleague, Frederick L. Stoever, preacher of the Gospel, who died on the 14th of September, in Germantown, Pa. He was sick only 13 days with an inflammatory fever, by which he suffered at times intensely. On Sunday, September 8th, he was to preach here, and when he opened worship in the morning and engaged in prayer he almost fainted. But when he commenced to preach on Romans 14, 17-18 he was strengthened and finished his sermon. He attempted to preach again in the evening, but could read only his text. A physician was immediately called, who did all he could to save his life, but the Lord had ordered otherwise. The friends of Germantown were with him day and night. I wrote to his parents in Lebanon who arrived here, filled with great sorrow when they saw their beloved son so near eternity, yet it was a great satisfaction to them to exchange a few words with him and receive his testimony that he was about entering into the joy of his Lord. Some ministers from other denominations also called and prayed for him.

" When I came to him on Sunday, September 8th, he was so filled with divine joy that he exclaimed : ' Glory ! Hallelujah ! O thou sweet Jesus ! Thou fairest among ten thousand ! '

" About one hour before his death Father Beck asked him how he was doing—when he answered ' Jesus is my all in all. ' His last words were ' Hallelujah ! Hallelujah ! ' and then he departed.

" Bro. Stoever sought the Lord when he was but seven years old, whereby he escaped many dangers to which young people are exposed. He joined the Evangelical Association quite early and remained a faithful member to the end. He was much interested in the Sunday-school cause, and was for a number of years a main support of our Sunday-school in the town of Lebanon. He greatly delighted in instructing children.

" In the Spring of this year he attended the East Pa. Conference in the city of Reading, and was received into the itinerancy and appointed as my colleague on Germantown circuit. I was never more rejoiced over a

colleague than over him, and we labored together with the greatest pleasure.

"As a preacher of the Gospel he was courageous, fearless, and powerful. He attacked all forms of sin, and being constrained by the love of Christ, he would warn the sinner of his danger and admonished professors of religion not to be satisfied with the name and form of Christianity, but to seek the power and press toward holiness of heart. He was diligent in prayer; he told me sometime ago that during the last three years he had his happiest seasons in secret prayer. In his conduct he was virtuous and enjoyed the esteem of all who became acquainted with him. In the family circle he was entertaining and edifying, which made his company very acceptable. At camp-meetings, protracted meetings, etc., he enjoyed himself greatly in uniting with the friends, praising God in singing and prayer. We shall never forget the blessed times we had together during the past Summer. Often the showers of divine blessings came upon us!"

## THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION IN CANADA.

### § 1. German Immigrants.

In this beautiful neighboring country God has begun a great and glorious work of salvation and prospered it until this day. This blessed work is of such importance and in its inception and progress it was interwoven with so many remarkable and joyous events that it seems proper to devote a special section to its history.

About the time when the revolutionary war was in full blast in the United States (then provinces), and for sometime after, a considerable number of German Mennonites from Bucks County, and later on also from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, immigrated into Canada and established settlements in Lincoln, Waterloo, Haldimand, Welland and Wentworth Counties and other sections of what was then "Upper Canada" (now Ontario). They entertained conscientious scruples about war and believed that they were in duty bound to remain faithful to the Government of Great Britain. As Canada was already at that time subject to England this fact coincided with their religious views about war and loyalty to that government.\*

From time to time still other immigrants arrived from Germany and settled in the southern counties of Upper Canada. With regard to Church privileges, these settlers remained for a long time like sheep without a shepherd—excepting, perhaps, the Mennonites—and sank, unconverted as they were, deep into the mire of sin and crime. True, men occasionally appeared among them who pretended to be preachers of the Gospel, but who were destitute of credentials and would soon become unmasked as depraved and rascally impostors, who greatly accelerated the downward course of the people into vice, by false doctrines and vicious examples.

Already in the year 1816 the Evangelical Association felt great sympathy for these lost sheep in the moral wilderness, and Bro. John Dreisbach visited them during that year, but the Association was as yet too weak to lay hold upon the work so far away. It was 20 years later when they found themselves able by God's grace to commence the *holy war* against sin in Upper Canada, and, thank God, the effort was gloriously crowned with one victory after another!

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\*) See a very interesting report in "History of the Mennonites" pp. 309-325, by Daniel K. Cassel.

## § 2. Religious and Ecclesiastical Situation.

Bishop Seybert, who here, as well as almost everywhere else, placed himself in the front rank of the battling soldiers for Christ, has left us an interesting and clear statement on "The Beginning and Progress of the Work in Upper Canada," which we insert here :

"By confessions the German inhabitants of Upper Canada in North America were *Catholics, Lutherans, Reformed, Mennonites, and Old Baptists*. Some called themselves also Evangelicals. The *United Brethren in Christ* also had visited them, whereby some people became awakened and converted to God ; but they afterward dropped the work and nothing permanent remained. Their preacher was deposed from the ministry on account of immoral conduct, whereupon the disciples of Alexander Campbell received him before he left Canada. Their presiding elder also associated himself with the Campbellites, and thus the United Brethren did not carry through their work in Canada. Everything then remained in its old condition among those Germans, and the condition of the people generally became worse.

"The Catholics, Lutherans and Reformed generally sat in thick moral darkness during the first half of the 19th century, because they did not have the light of life. Even their preachers were mostly immoral characters ; some of them would get drunk at every opportunity ; even while performing the sacred duties of infant baptism, they would appear in an intoxicated condition, so that they could not properly proceed with the transactions ; but afterward pandemonium would be let loose. Then the priest, the god-fathers, relatives and visitors would get dead-drunk, so that they could scarcely find their way home again. One of these 'jolly' pastors became so completely intoxicated at a wedding and baptism of an infant in Puslinch that he fell from a chair. His adherents helped him up and put him on the chair again. The woman of the house, however, angrily protested exclaiming with a shrill voice : 'Why don't you let him lie on the floor ?'

"In the vicinity of Hamburg there was a shocking condition of affairs in a moral respect. Once a Lutheran pastor intended to administer the Lord's Supper on Easter Monday. The appointment had been regularly made and he also arrived in good time in Hamburg ; but he was met by a few of his members one of whom carried a small keg of beer on his shoulder and the other had a fiddle. They demanded of the pastor to postpone the sacrament, because they had arranged for a dance on that day. He complied with the request ; the sacrament was postponed to another time, and the dance took its place ! But this pastor did not fare very well after all. He staid with a man named Schmidt, and after he had retired to bed at a late hour one of his jolly brethren—a son of Bacchus—rushed angrily into the house, demanding : 'Where is the pastor ?' 'In bed,' Schmidt

replied, 'what do you want of him?' 'Why, I will club him, because he has received so much of my money and has never benefited me any.' Mr. Schmidt now had to exert all his influence to restrain this man or else the pastor would no doubt have received a severe flogging, for having been so accommodating as to postpone sacrament for his wanton members. Said Mr. Schmidt, who was then a rationalist, was afterward converted to God and became a useful preacher among us, serving for many years as a presiding elder in the New York and Canada Conferences.

"Among the Catholics shocking events occurred. At one time a priest wanted to bestow extreme unction upon a dying child in Puslinch, but the child's father forbade it. After the child's death the priest forbade its burial in the Catholic Cemetery, but those interested managed to bury its body at night. When this came to the ears of the priest he had it disinterred and sold the body for money to a physician. When this shocking affair became public the police took hold of the matter and the priest took to flight! The Lutherans about this time held a Church dedication in Waterloo, which was turned into a bacchanalian frolic. The more respectable portion of the people now began to deplore this state of things, and the deterioration of their Churches, for the wickedness of their pastors had become too manifest to be endured; although the drunkards and swearers usually excused them by saying: '*We must do according to the words of our pastors, and not according to their works.*'"

"Among the Mennonites there was still a better appearance, at least outwardly; many of them endeavored to lead a quiet, virtuous, peaceable life. But as regards the spiritual life that comes from God, the new birth and the renewal of heart by the Holy Ghost, they were generally ignorant, knowing nothing of the blessedness of true godliness. The same condition of things prevailed among the old Baptists (Dunkers); they were dead and cold. Among the '*Herr's people*' (New Mennonites) some may have had a religious heart-experience, but they were very egotistical and separated from all other good men and could therefore do nothing for the improvement of the German people of Upper Canada, hence there was no improvement in the general condition of these unfortunate people."

### § 3. Initiation of the Work.

Of this Bishop Seybert now comes to speak, as follows: "The initiatory movement to our work occurred in the following manner: Somewhere in the fourth decade of the 19th century a pretended Methodist of Canada kidnapped the daughter of a Catholic in the State of New York under the pretence of affording her more freedom, and a good education and an opportunity to learn the truths of religion. But suspicion fell upon this pretender that he intended to forsake his own wife to live adulterously with this young lady. The Catholic father was in great distress concerning his daughter and was on the search for some one well-qualified to go with him

to rescue her. For this purpose he engaged one of our brethren who lived near Niagara Falls, through whom he soon received information about the daughter and her rescue was accomplished. This brother whose name was Jacob Focht made a journey into Canada for said purpose, and on this trip he became acquainted with German people, who loved the truth, who, although being entirely German, sought edification among the English Methodists. Through Bro. Focht they learned that there were German itinerant preachers on the other side of the Niagara River, and that there was some hope that they might get over into Canada. They expressed their strong desire that he would direct them into Canada, so that they might hear the Gospel preached with power in their own language. Bro. Focht informed our preachers of this intense desire of those Germans in Chippawa; soon afterward Bro. John G. Zinser visited them and preached in the houses of two natural brothers, Martin and Christian Schaub, which was the first visit of one of our itinerant ministers into Canada.\* Afterward the brethren Charles Hammer and Joseph Harlacher also visited that country.

"About the same time entrance was obtained in Waterloo, about 100 miles north-west of Chippawa. Several people moved from Waterloo County into the State of Ohio. They were Mennonites, who had warm hearts for righteousness. There they visited a camp-meeting, where they were received in a most friendly manner by our people. The plain and humble appearance and conduct of our ministers, and their powerful and unctuous preaching made a deep impression upon these sincere and truth-loving people, and soon they wrote letters to their friends in Waterloo that they had found true Christians in the 'States' who serve God in the Spirit and truth in the German language. This information awaked a real desire also to become acquainted with our preachers, and as they learned that we publish a German religious paper, they subscribed for it and made known their desires through it. A few of the families mentioned, removed back again to Waterloo, and prayed earnestly that we might make a beginning there.

"The year 1837 was the year of the actual beginning of our work in Canada. After Bro. Zinser had made his first visit to Chippawa in the earlier part of the year, and Hammer and Harlacher had followed him, the brethren Hammer, Harlacher and Dellinger made successive visits to Waterloo during the winter, and at both places their preaching resulted in a mighty awakening. Sinners were aroused and converted and the petitions became so numerous and strong, that the Eastern Conference, at its session at Orwigsburg, March 28th, 1838, was distressed for want of a plan how to comply with this urgent call. And as at the same time petitions and invitations from German settlements along the Mohawk River in the State of New York, were presented, the Conference organized a Missionary Society,

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\*) Excepting the visit of Bro. John Dreisbach in 1816.

which was the first one in our Church, under the name: 'The German Evangelical Missionary Society of North America.' The second article of its constitution read as follows: 'The object of this society shall be to make arrangements and provide means, to extend and promote the Kingdom of God by means of missionaries.' Then auxiliaries were organized at different places during the conference year, and until the next Conference session held at Lebanon, Pa., in 1839, already five hundred dollars had been collected. The Waterloo mission in Upper Canada was thereupon regularly established and a preacher stationed there. Henceforth the work progressed in a remarkable and cheering manner.

"In the year 1838 a young brother, Michael Eis, also made a good beginning in the Niagara district and Lincoln County. His preaching places were in Chippawa, Sodom, Stonycreek, Rainham, etc. He labored according to his judgment in the name of the Lord for the salvation of the Germans in Canada and the honor of the Evangelical Association. He was, however, somewhat infirm physically, but God blessed his labors, and good work was commenced at said places."

#### § 4. The First Camp-meeting in Canada, etc.

"On Waterloo mission a work was done already in 1838 such as was never accomplished anywhere else among us. In August a camp-meeting was held before we had a single regularly received member there! The missionary wrote to Bishop Seybert that he should come to their help at this meeting, and he well knew that help was very much needed. He hastened thither, riding on horseback a distance of 390 miles in the hottest of the season, to assist in this work. He was taken sick at Buffalo, but he pressed on the next day some 50 miles, and finally arrived with two brethren in good time. There stood 15 tents on the farm of David Erb, a few miles north of Berlin, before we had received a single member in Canada.

"The Lord revealed himself here on the first evening so powerfully through his word, that hard hearts were melted and tears of repentance began to flow. The meeting improved daily and various kinds of people were awakened and happily converted to God. Even if one wanted to go to sleep the prayers and groans of penitents would disturb the sleeper, for they lay upon their knees in the tents, wrestling with God for salvation through Christ.

"When the Lord's Supper was administered on Monday, there appeared newly converted Catholics, Lutherans, Reformed, and others with tearful eyes at the table of the Lord. On Wednesday morning the 29th of August, 1839, at the close of the meeting the first of our congregations in Upper Canada was organized, which was joined by 26 persons who were divided into two classes; one in Berlin, the other in the surrounding neighborhood. Great care was taken in thus founding the work in Canada; our General

Rules were read to the people and they were requested to forsake all sin forever, deny themselves, eschew fashionable dress, the pride of life, and luxurious living, honor God alone and cleave to him with all their hearts. A leader for each class was then selected, and thus was laid on that morning the regular foundation of the work in Canada.

"The Lord in his providence ordered it so that we obtained two distinguished and influential men in our favor in the beginning. One of them was Bro. Sauer, a Methodist preacher, who supported our mission liberally and remembered the cause of missions in his last will and testament with a good bequest; he attended this camp-meeting and said that our doctrine pleased him well and that this work was like unto *Old Methodism*; the other was H. W. Peterson, the son of a Lutheran minister, who was then editor of a newspaper in Berlin, and who favored our work and defended it against unfriendly attacks. This man also succeeded in obtaining for us the recognition of the government, whereby the Evangelical people were then secured and protected in all respects. Now the 'ice was broken' and the work of God prospered in our hands in a signal manner."

In September, 1839, Bishop Seybert also visited the places where Bro. Eis had labored and found many awakened and penitent people at Rainham and Stonycreek, who were soon after gloriously converted to God and joined the Association. About 60 miles from Stonycreek, Bro. Eis had also found a large open door where we soon established a society.

"In the Spring of 1840 the East Pa. Conference sent the brethren Michael Eis and Michael Sindlinger as missionaries to Black Creek mission and Bro. Joseph Harlacher to Waterloo. The year before Bro. Christian Holl had labored on the Waterloo mission, and Bro. Eis alone on Black Creek, which was already in 1840 changed into a circuit, and a camp-meeting was held in the neighborhood of Sodom. In 1841 Bro. Harlacher again remained on Waterloo, which was changed into a two-handed circuit and Bro. Jacob Dereich was given him as a colleague. Awakenings took place here and there among the Germans in Canada and the work spread rapidly in many directions. In the town of Berlin we built a church already in 1841, which was dedicated on the 26th of December to the service of the true God, and about this time another house for worship was built in the Gore district, which gave an opportunity for an extensive revival during which many people were converted.

"Within three years from the beginning a great number of people had been converted—Yes, converted to God into eternal life—and we had obtained a strong foothold in the British territory.

"Already in the year 1847 a presiding elder district was formed in Canada and soon the 'Mennonite conversion' took place 20 miles north of the Niagara, when even one of their Bishops was drawn by the Heavenly Magnet of love who then 'learned the way more fully' and was converted into the divine life, on account of which he and his converted brethren

were rejected and cast out by the Mennonite High Council—which, however, caused an earthquake among them and resulted in a serious division.”\*

### § 5. A Remarkable Letter.

In the year 1838 a certain gentleman, already mentioned, Mr. H. W. Peterson wrote a letter to the editor of the *Christliche Botschafter*, William W. Orwig, which appeared in the September number of that periodical. This Peterson was the son of an aged Lutheran minister, and also the editor of a German newspaper, issued in the town of Berlin. In this letter he portrayed the condition of the Germans in the following manner:

#### “PRESENT STATE OF CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE GERMANS OF UPPER CANADA.

*Dear Brother in the Lord:—*

I would like to call, if possible, the attention of your brethren in the ministry, and of your principal conference especially, to the present deplorable condition of many of my fellow-citizens here. In Waterloo township, where most of the Germans of Upper Canada live, and among whom there are so-called Catholics, Lutherans, Reformed, Mennonites, Dunkers, and United Brethren; the Mennonites and Dunkers are the only ones having their regular teachers, and consequently regular divine service. I also rejoice exceedingly, that these my brethren are provided with well-disposed pastors; but, at the same time, I regret very much, that others, who are also anxiously concerned for the salvation of their souls, but are excluded from the privileges of the Mennonite and Dunker societies, are entirely destitute of the services of a regular preacher. It is true, there is a man here, named Bindeman, who pretends to be an ‘Evangelical’ minister, holding general meetings every three or four weeks; but I regret from the bottom of my heart, that we cannot repose that confidence in this teacher of morality, nor unite with him in intimate Christian brotherly love, as we should like and ought to do, as genuine Christians; the condition, therefore, of the United Brethren, Lutherans, Reformed, Methodists, and such as have not joined any church or sect, call for sympathy and even commiseration by every child of God. Many of us are almost like straying sheep, whose pastor is absent.

“Compared with us, the United States are far better supplied with ministers of every denomination. How is this? Even the ‘Evangelical Association,’ whose ministers seem not to labor either for money or fame, has forsaken or at least forgotten or neglected us.

“*Dear Bro. Orwig:* I greatly mistake the principles of your Church or rather of your brethren in the ministry, if their main object is money or fame; for the three or four preachers, whom your ‘Association’ formerly sent us, out of Christian love, manifested both humility and self-denial;

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\* ) Report of Bishop Seybert.

and I believe, that their labors here were not in vain. Bro. Jacob Riegel, especially, was well-received by all among whom he labored. By dint of indefatigable labor, self-denial, persevering, enlightened zeal for the glory of God and the welfare of immortal souls, he, or one like him, might accomplish a vast amount of good among us. And as far as my information goes, some one of the dear brethren that have visited us, could make himself as useful in our midst, as our dear Bro. Riegel. But alas! we are poor. We fear, we are not able to give him a sufficient support. But, dear brother! shall we, because we are too poor to give a teacher a sufficient support, shall we on that account be deprived of his services, and suffer and starve? Will ye Pennsylvanians not have pity upon us? Will you, who have plenty and to spare, will you let us suffer in the wilderness, without any pity? or will you pray for us, and if possible, send us a spiritual guide? Could you not contribute something toward his support the first year? or could he not visit us three or four times during the year? But it would be better if he could live among us.—Much money we cannot give him; but we will do what we can.

“Under the wise guidance of a truly Christian pastor, who would adorn his doctrine by a pious life, there could, with the help of God, soon a considerable society be gathered in our midst. Perhaps you can spare us the dear Bro. Riegel, provided he is willing to come. He would be the very man for us, because he can preach in English and German, and is, as far as I know, without a family yet. But whoever he may be, that comes to us as a laborer in the vineyard of Christ, in order to do good in the name of God, he must have proper certificates as to character, usefulness, etc.; otherwise I fear very much, that he could not accomplish much for a long time. And why? Whoever comes, will find that out soon enough.

“The visits of pious German preachers, no matter whether Methodists, Evangelical, or United Brethren, would be exceedingly welcome to every individual that is concerned for the salvation of his soul; the number of these, however, seems to be but small, and is, alas! daily decreasing. Come, therefore, over, to help us. That our kind and merciful Father in heaven may soon send us a genuine minister of his word, is the heart-felt prayer of a

POOR SINNER.

Waterloo Township, U. C., July 15th, 1838.”

#### § 6. Reports of the Brethren John G. Zinser and Charles Hammer.

As the reader has already learned from the report by Bishop Seybert that the brethren Zinser and Hammer upon the information brought by Bro. Focht, visited Canada several times, it will be in place here to insert the reports of their visits, although this will take us several years back again:

Bro. John G. Zinser wrote on the 28th of June, as follows:—

“During this Summer I visited Canada, where I remained nine days;

I preached five times at several places, and on each occasion had very attentive hearers who were nearly all Germans—for there are many German people in this section. These people are very poorly provided with Gospel privileges. The Mennonite congregations are the most numerous among the professors of Christianity. But there are many people who make no profession and live outside the Churches mostly in a plain manner. It is very desirable that faithful preachers be sent to them; I believe the Lord would gather himself a people there. We ought to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers.

"I could not but look upon the condition of the people with sorrow and pity; they are like sheep without a shepherd. There seem to be people there, however, who are engaged in their minds with the question, how to be saved, and their solution seems to be that they must live outwardly in a plain, common way, but of the life of God in the soul they know nothing. At the same time not a few are instructed by their wretched, unspiritual pastors to deny true godliness altogether. The detrimental doctrine which is a support of the devil's kingdom: '*That we must remain poor sinners all our lifetime and can never become free,*' is here also, as in other parts of the world, generally prevailing."

Bro. Charles Hammer wrote under date January 27th, 1837, about his two visits to Canada, as follows:—

"Since our Annual Conference I journeyed twice into Upper Canada, where I found many Germans who are very desirous to hear the word of God in their mother tongue. My first trip thither I made last October, and stayed there for ten days and preached nine times to very attentive hearers. The second trip I made in the beginning of this month, and traveled about 100 miles northward, where I met with many American and European Germans, who seemed to me like sheep without a shepherd. The preaching in the German language seemed altogether a new thing to these people. I cannot remember ever to have met with people who evinced such hungering for the word of God, as I found there. Though I had but little time at command I preached eight times before I left these parts—each day twice—and I have reason to believe, that it was not in vain. Some hearts were so deeply touched by the word that tears flowed freely. How cheering to a servant of the Lord when he sees that there is a sincere desire among the people to hear the truth; to such he can preach with freedom and pleasure. I had very solicitous feelings while reflecting upon the forlorn condition of the people as I was leaving them, because they have no faithful guides to show unto them the way to heaven. I could not help thinking if they had the opportunity to hear the Gospel preached with power as many have it in the United States, very many would obediently bow under the sceptre of Immanuel. O that believers might pray the Lord to send forth laborers into his harvest for it is truly great and the faithful laborers are few."

### § 7. The First Reports of Our Regular Missionary in Canada.

It has already been stated elsewhere that the Eastern Conference, which went into session on the 11th of April, 1839, took hold systematically of the mission work in Canada. Two missions were established, namely, at Waterloo and Black Creek. Bro. Christian Holl was sent to the first and Bro. Michael Eis to the second. Bro. Holl's first report of Waterloo Mission was as follows :

"In the name of Christ I take up my pen, in order to report the state of this mission. On the 9th of May we arrived, by the help of God, safely at Berlin. We found the friends well in body, spiritually it was as might be expected, they having had no preacher, no regular nor proper use of the means of grace. Some were also disappointed in their expectation with regard to the preacher, yet I was received in a very friendly manner. I found a neglected, uncultivated vineyard -with no fence around it, and also realized the truth of the proverb that 'all beginnings are difficult.' I had also to hear some discouraging expressions ; for some were faint-hearted and believed that very little could be accomplished here—all this was poor encouragement. Yet my faith failed me not, because I placed my confidence in God who has said : 'Fear thou not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed for I am thy God, I will help thee, yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.' After I had been here several weeks I noticed that darkness and unbelief began to yield ; the friends took courage to move onward and our meetings waxed better, our prayer and class-meetings were blessed with awakenings and conversions, the friends were greatly cheered and resolved to fight the good fight of faith and zealously serve the Lord. To the glory of God I can say that things have changed for the better.

"Some time ago four families and myself agreed to go to a camp-meeting on Buffalo circuit, in the State of New York, although it was 115 miles away ; we rejoiced in anticipation of the meeting ; but shortly before the time arrived we received information that no camp-meeting would be held there ; the reason of which I cannot tell. This was to us very unpleasant news, but it led to a proposition to hold a camp-meeting in this part of the country. This found much favor among the friends, and it was resolved that a camp-meeting should be held on the land of David Erb two miles north of the village of Waterloo, commencing on the 23rd of August. At this time I know of 15 tents to be erected, but we expect a few more.

"We have already opened a German Sunday-school here with 41 scholars, the number increasing with every session. At a class-meeting held recently I solicited support for this school of the friends present, who contributed \$34,—some of the friends were not present, but they will also give their mite.

"The friends sent greeting to Bro. Seybert, and desire very much that he might attend this camp-meeting if possible. It would be a great joy to see him on our camp-ground.

"A hearty greeting by me to our Missionary Society and its branches, and all the other friends. I desire earnestly that they remember us in their prayers.

CHRISTIAN HOLL.

Berlin, Upper Canada, June 24th, 1839."

Extract from the second report of Bro. Holl, concerning that mission :—

"On August 20th we were greatly rejoiced by the arrival of the Brethren John Sindlinger and Michael Eis in our midst. Though much fatigued by their long journey, yet Bro. Sindlinger preached for us at Berlin that very evening, from Rom. 8, 1. The sermon was plain and pointed, and to judge from its effects, must have been taken to heart, for tears both of sorrow and joy flowed freely. Late in the evening of the 21st, our joy was still increased by the arrival of our dear Bro. Seybert, accompanied by the ministers of Buffalo circuit in New York, and some friends from Williamsville. The courage and faith of our friends waxed strong. On the 23rd our camp-meeting began. The opening sermon was delivered by Bro. Seybert, from Rev. 2, 4-7; heaven seemed to open, and showers of blessings descended upon us. On Saturday the meeting increased in feeling and interest. Toward evening some rain fell. On Sunday morning crowds of people came from every direction, and the conduct of all present was admirable—all were filled with wonder and astonishment. In the evening awakenings and conversions broke out, and shouts of praise and thanksgiving ascended to heaven, because the Lord is merciful and his goodness endureth forever. During that night and the following day, powerful storms, interspersed with heavy peals of thunder, accompanied by copious showers, passed by in quick succession. On Monday showers of blessings came down upon the assembly, and sinners were converted to God. In the evening the meeting became uncommonly interesting; the cries of sinners for mercy, and the shouts of praise and thanksgiving of the children of God resounded from the camp-ground. I myself felt like singing with the poet :—

*'O! dasz ich tausend Zungen hätte  
Und einen tausendfachen Mund,  
So stimmt' ich damit um die Wette,  
Vom allertiefsten Herzensgrund,  
Ein Loblied nach dem andern an  
Vom Dem, was Gott an mir gethan.'*

On Tuesday we celebrated the Lord's Supper, and 54 communicants partook of the sacred emblems. In the evening we had another blessed waiting upon the Lord. Our parting on Wednesday morning was uncommonly touching and affecting; God's presence was so powerfully manifested,

that his children praised him and shouted for joy. Before the meeting was closed, an invitation was given to join the Church, whereupon 26 persons had their names recorded; thus the foundation of our society here was laid. Since that time some more have joined us. The prospects to gather a people here to the Lord among the Germans are very good."

The first report from the Black Creek mission in Upper Canada, is as follows:—

"*Dear Brethren in Christ:*

"I feel it my duty to send you a report of this my distant mission field. I can say to the praise of the Lord, that he takes the lead and prepares the way for me. Last year when I arrived in this wilderness and commenced to preach, weak in body and in spirit as I was, I found open doors and was kindly received by some children of God. But the religious condition of these people in general is indeed wretched. Their religion mostly consists in the observance of some rites and a plain dress. Yet I can say, that a great change has already taken place, and many begin to inquire what they must do to be saved; and already some profess to have found peace with God. My meetings are generally well attended, and light from on high begins to penetrate the dark places. Though the prince of darkness is enraged and sets opposition and persecution on foot, yet there is every reason to believe that the Lord will gather himself a people here.

"In the beginning of June I traveled about 60 miles upward along the shores of Lake Erie, and found a large settlement of Germans. I offered to preach for them, and permission was readily granted. I then preached on Sunday to a large congregation, and God was pleased to own and bless his word. These people, that have for years gone astray like sheep in the wilderness, manifested a great longing after the word of God. They wept for joy that they were privileged once more to hear the pure Gospel preached in their vernacular tongue. At the close of the meeting, some men came forward with tears in their eyes, entreating me to preach once more for them; they confessed that they must change their lives, or else they could not go to heaven. I made some private calls, and found the people greatly interested in their souls' salvation. My heart was filled with joy and gratitude to God for the missionary arrangements of the Evangelical Association, whereby it has become possible to preach the Gospel of Christ to these far-distant perishing souls. Brethren in Christ, let us work while it is day, for the night cometh when no one can work. All our labors, our property, yea our lives ought to be consecrated to the Lord; and the main object of our labors ought to be, to save souls and thus help in building the house of the Lord. Dear brethren, remember in your prayers your brethren who labor in the distance, that the Lord may protect and assist them, in order that His kingdom may be extended through their instrumentality and many souls be saved. Pray that the word of the

Lord may have free course and be glorified everywhere. Lord, grant each and everyone of us grace ! Amen.

MICHAEL EIS.

June— 1839.”

This mission prospered exceedingly the very first year, and at its close numbered 84 members ; for this reason it was changed into a regular circuit the second year, and received two preachers.

#### § 8. Report of the First Camp-meeting in the “Canada Museum.”

Soon after the above described camp-meeting, an article from the pen of the editor of the “Canada Museum,” the aforementioned Mr. H. W. Peterson, appeared in said paper, which represents the views and impressions of an intelligent *outsider*, concerning that meeting :

##### “THE GERMAN CAMP-MEETING

which commenced yesterday a week ago in this vicinity was continued until last Wednesday morning, and as we are told, several important conversions have taken place. We also had the pleasure to attend on Sunday and remained there until 10 o'clock in the evening, during which time several sermons were preached to an audience of about 800 people, mostly Germans, among whom were Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Reformed, Baptists, Mennonites, Dunkers, Methodists, United Brethren in Christ, Evangelicals and others who all—all—of them, as far as we could observe, were attentive and conducted themselves very properly. We walked almost unknown—more than a quarter of a mile away in a circle around the camp, in order to see what might be going on, with the intention of preventing possible disturbances, if need be, but we nowhere noticed the least impropriety—everyone conducted himself as it was to be expected from well trained Germans, which will secure respect for them in any part of the world, and redounds to their special honor.

“We had the rare enjoyment at this meeting to hear the sermons of the preachers, John Seybert and John M. Sindlinger. The first one was under God's grace the instrument of the conversion of the latter. When we arrived on the ground, John Seybert had already read his text and delivered a great part of his powerful sermon, but we heard enough to convince us that he is actuated by the right spirit and preaches divine truth clearly and in purity. John M. Sindlinger preached on Matthew 13, 36–43 very powerfully and impressively.

“We never heard preaching that was more unctuous and penetrating, clothed in the plainest language, so that any German, whether born in Europe or America, could thoroughly understand and lay to heart every word of it. The preachers are humble in their dress and conduct, and as faithful sowers of the Word, they have, with divine help, already scattered much good seed, both in the United States and Canada. Rev. Seybert—as Bishop and overseer of all congregations belonging to this Christian de-

nomination in the United States—has during several years traveled more than 50,000 miles, in promoting true Christianity. May this apostolic and diligent laborer in the vineyard of the Lord, and his co-laborers, accomplish much good in the name of Christ, and be received joyfully everywhere. They deserve in a special degree the good-will and love of the Germans in Upper Canada, because they came a great distance over valley and mountain with no other object than to preach the glad tidings of salvation to their numerous German Brethren in this country, in such a manner that every one who is willing to listen can understand it. May the Lord bless his messengers !

“ Following are the names of the preachers who were present at this campmeeting : Christian Holl (of Berlin), John Seybert, John M. Sindlinger, George Ramige, Philip Schwilly and Michael Eis—six—and all are Europeans except Bro. Seybert, who is an American. And all of them are God-fearing and deeply pious men.

“ It has been reported that 26 persons were received as members of the Evangelical Association at this meeting.”

#### § 9. Missionary Labors of Bro. Joseph Harlacher.

Bro. Harlacher succeeded Bro. Holl as missionary in Waterloo and Berlin. He commenced his labors on the first Sunday in May, 1840, by preaching in Berlin on Ezekiel 33, 7. 8. 9., and it was a blessed meeting. In the evening he preached in the house of John Hoffman ; the Lord was graciously near and the Word made a deep impression. On the following Tuesday evening he again preached in Berlin on 2 Cor. 12, 14.

The friends had been without preaching for some time, so that they were hungering for Gospel food, and the meeting was a blessed one. At the close the missionary and the friends joined in a covenant of prayer ; to pray twice a day in secret for a revival of the work in Berlin and on the entire mission. Nearly all the members entered into the covenant. A remarkable work of conversion followed as a clear answer to these united prayers. Bro. Harlacher was not satisfied with his two appointments, hence he started on the 9th of May to find new places. He found a log cabin, 20 miles west of Berlin and about 4 miles from Hamburg, which had been built by Lutherans as a church, but as they had no pastor, it was not in use. He obtained permission to preach in it, and on the 10th of May he preached there on Ezekiel 33. 7. 8. 9., and afterwards continued to preach there regularly until some of the old members rebelled against it and the officers resolved to close the door, only Father Muerner voted against their resolution. But Satan came too late this time, for the seed of the Word had already taken root in some hearts. Private houses were then opened, among them were Muerner's, Linglebach's and Geo. Kleinknecht's. Later on the work spread much farther in this section and one of the chief societies in the Canada Conference was gathered here.

### § 10. Further Labors and Successes.

A few years previous a family by the name of Johns living in New York State was converted to God, and one of the daughters, named Charlotte, went to Canada and married a young man named Bieber. She was one of Harlacher's spiritual children. When the missionary came to Berlin he made inquiry concerning the place where she had gone, it was in the township of Puslinch, where shortly before there was nothing but a thick pine forest. Soon after his arrival he started off to find this lost child, and late in the afternoon of the day he arrived in the settlement where stood a few log cabins in the small clearing. He inquired for the Bieber family and found their father's house. He told the father that he was an Evangelical missionary and asked for lodging over night which was readily granted. Soon Charlotte appeared with a child upon her arm, and her astonishment and joy was very great. She said she had prayed, wept, waited and looked for a long time to see once more the preacher who had led her to Christ—and then she was willing to die! Her longing for the Word of Life was very intense, and she soon asked whether he would preach there that evening, but he thought it was almost too late because no appointment had been made. "Oh," said she, "I will make it known." Father Bieber also gave his consent. Charlotte then hastened off with her babe upon her arm to carry the good news to their neighbors in the forest, that the preacher had arrived and would preach in the evening. She also started out several neighbors' boys on this errand, who ran through the whole neighborhood and called the people together. Quite a number assembled, to whom the missionary preached on Luke 19, 20. The Lord blessed the word, and many were deeply touched, so that tears flowed freely. Charlotte's cup of joy was full and running over. This then became a regular preaching place. An unconverted parson who frequently became intoxicated and enjoyed dances, had to leave those parts.

In New Hope (now Hespeler), Bro. Harlacher also commenced to preach, and several persons were converted to God. Later on the work was extended considerably. In Preston he made an appointment for preaching on the street, whereby a great concourse of people were brought together, and many hearts were touched by the word. In Blenheim Township he preached in Block's school-house, in the house of Mr. Guggisberger, and where the village of Strassburg now stands. in the house of Mr. Geyer, in Wilmot Township in the house of Mr. Wing, grandfather of Rev. M. L. Wing, at present presiding elder in the Canada Conference, but persecution became so fierce that he could preach there only once. Then a neighbor, Mr. Dewitt, opened his house, but with the same result; then a blacksmith named Feick permitted him to preach in his house. When Harlacher came there again after some time, Mr. Feick met him at the gate and said: "Yes, Harlacher, I cannot allow you to preach any more in my house."

Upon being asked for the reason, Feick replied : " Why, my customers threaten to leave me." Harlacher looked steadily into his eyes and said : " You know that you are a sinner and a wicked man, and yet God has given you bread and kept you and your family ; now, don't you think He will also give you bread when you are converted to Him ? " Whereupon Feick grasped the bridle and said : " Come in ! " He and his family were happily converted to God, and had most blessed meetings in their house ; but alas, after he had served the Lord for a while, his old inebriate comrades seduced him again into his former besetting sin—drunkenness. Yet, when they attempted to persecute the missionary, he would stand up for him and even make an emphatic use of his fists in his defense. Also west of Huron Harlacher found openings, being permitted to preach in a school-house several miles away from the place where the city of Stratford is now situated, where at that time stood only a few log cabins. He lodged with a man named Kastner. The oldest son was the proprietor of the homestead and his parents lived with him. Sometime after, this son said to his mother : " When that preacher comes again, send him away and tell him I wont receive him." On a Saturday Harlacher came there in the midst of a snow-storm. Then the aged mother stepped out and told him this, whereupon he turned his horse away without saying a word and went to a man named Sebring. After mother Kastner had thus sent the missionary away, the youngest daughter said to her : " O mother, why have you done this ? You have turned away this man who has done us no harm and has prayed so beautifully for us ! " Quite nonplussed she finally replied : " Why, Peter told me to send him away." This daughter was afterward converted and became a member of the Church ; when later on a revival took place there, several members of the Sebring family were also converted to God. Afterward a part of the Sebring farm was allotted and a village arose bearing the name of Sebringville, where we now have a flourishing congregation and a fine church edifice.

Bro. Harlacher also commenced to preach in Woolwich Township in the houses of J. Yost and J. Baumann in the so-called " King's forest," a large unsurveyed forest belonging to the crown of England ; but the people invaded it, each selected for himself a place, staked off as much land as he wanted, erected a log cabin upon it and began making improvements. These settlers agreed among themselves that when in the government survey of the land a man's clearing should be divided, his neighbor should pay him for what he gets of it. Many people in this wilderness had not even a wagon track to their cabins, only footpaths from one to the other, indicated by marks on the trees.

A man named Stricker, known to the missionary, lived in this forest and he set out to find him and preached there ; at the close of the sermon all the people present lay on their knees and cried to God. A main road was open through this forest from which all the footpaths led to the cabins

of the settlers. This road went through the place where the village of Heidelberg now stands. Near by stood at that time a big sugar-maple, to which Bro. Harlacher attached a piece of paper containing the notice that he would preach on a specified Sunday morning under that tree. When he came at the appointed time he found a large concourse of people assembled to whom he preached on John 1, 29.

He now preached two or three times on Sunday and once on each week day excepting Saturday. On his journey from his appointment on the "Lower" road to the one on the Huron road, he had to pass through the village of New Hamburg, where William Schmidt and Solomon Weber lived, both of whom had attended the meetings at Mr. Feick's, and felt an intense longing after truth. Through the wickedness of the state church clergy in Europe, William Schmidt had become tainted with infidelity, but now the Gospel truth began to make an impression, and he walked many miles to these meetings. When Harlacher traveled through Hamburg, he felt a strong desire to raise the Gospel banner there also, and finally found entrance with a man named Zinkan, but this man was so fiercely persecuted that he closed the door again. Now a certain Mr. Brill opened his house, but on account of persecution he also recalled the appointment. Then Solomon Weber took courage and opened his house, but fared no better than the others. When Harlacher came to fill his appointment Weber said: "I cannot let you preach here; Mr. Scott, who owns the house, will drive me out if I permit it, but," pointing to a loghouse across Smith's Creek, "in that house lives George Eby, who says, if you don't consider him too much of a castaway, you might preach there." The missionary went over to Eby who received him gladly. He was a Mennonite but had fallen into sin, and had also suffered temporal reverses. On the 21st of September, 1840, Harlacher preached for the first time at Eby's. The persecutors let him alone—they considered him too low and said there was nothing left of him to be spoiled. Meanwhile Bishop Seybert arrived on the mission and preached with great liberty and power at Eby's on the 29th of November, to a crowded house; many were deeply touched, and after the sermon Bro. Harlacher told the people, if any one wanted to come to Christ, they would pray with him, when immediately a tall man, who stood at the door, said: "Well, Harlacher, pray for me!" and fell on his knees. Several others followed his example and also fell on their knees. After a while the tall man exclaimed: "Harlacher, pray also for my wife." This produced quite a commotion among those present. This meeting was really the beginning of the work at Hamburg.

On the 15th of December, 1840, Harlacher wrote in his diary: "This morning I started before daylight from North Easthope in a snow-storm, and struggled six miles through a forest over a bad road, and preached to a few families who live in great poverty in this wilderness. I had great

freedom in preaching to these simple people. In the evening I preached at Hamburg, on Luke 10, 42. Many persons were quite attentive and the Lord blessed his Word." Also in Moyer's school-house, a few miles north of Hespeler, he preached with good effect, and in Waterloo, where the work became quite strong.

In Puslinch, now Morriston, the Lord's Supper was administered on the 1st of January, 1841, during a great meeting, held in the house of Father Kalfas, where the presiding elder, John M. Sindlinger, assisted Harlacher. There were a number of seekers of salvation there, and the operations of divine power were indescribable. At this meeting 45 persons joined the Church, and a class was formed, from which in later years Jacob Kaechele and John C. Morlock went forth into the ministry.

On the first Sunday in 1841, a quarterly meeting was held in Berlin and John M. Sindlinger, presiding elder, was present. The school-house had been locked, then John Hoffman opened his carpenter shop for the meeting, and although the room was too small, the Lord revealed His power in a remarkable manner. The pressure was so great that the seekers could not find room enough to kneel. Several young men had secured a place on the carpenter's work-bench and were so wrought upon by the Spirit of God that they fell upon their knees on that bench and began to pray. Solomon Weber and William Schmidt were among the seekers of salvation and the latter found the peace of God at that time.

In the Spring of 1841 the conference changed this mission into a double-handed circuit, and returned Joseph Harlacher with Jacob Dereich, a young beginner, but pious and useful as his colleague.

### § 11. A Remarkable Meeting.

As Bro. Harlacher journeyed to Hamburg and Wilmot to his appointments, he had to pass through a village called Petersburg. Besides a tavern and a store it contained only a few houses. The tavern was the rendezvous for drunkards, gamblers and rowdies generally, especially on Sunday. Whenever Harlacher passed through there he was mocked in various ways; he often felt a strong desire to preach there, but there was no school-house in the village nor any other opportunity. He felt stirred in spirit like the apostle Paul at Athens, and said to himself: "Shall Satan have unhindered sway in the hearts of these people? Is Jesus and His word of salvation to be entirely shut out from this place? Did not Christ die for these people also? Can I not find a way to preach to them?" Finally he made the attempt to preach in the open air. Without counseling with any man, he announced an appointment in the name of the Lord. At a bushmeeting near Hamburg he announced that he would preach in Petersburg on the 21st of August in the street in front of J. Ernst's tavern. This news spread like wild-fire. When on the appointed Sunday morning he arrived, he found a crowd of people

assembled, and many more still coming. Some had even come 20 miles, of course, induced by different motives. When Harlacher arrived in front of the tavern, he looked about for a suitable place to preach from, and then took his stand on a wagon, which belonged to a brother from Hamburg. Bro. Solomon Weber held an umbrella over him, to protect him from the heat of the sun. An elderly, robust man now came near the wagon. This was Father Staebler. The preacher reached out his hand and invited him to come up on the wagon and sit by him, which he did. After having opened the meeting by singing and prayer the preacher announced his text, Acts 13, 41: "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." Great solemnity rested upon the audience and close attention was given, with exception of a few rowdies, who had a bottle filled with strong drink which they passed around; but they could not make much disturbance. Harlacher did not pay much attention to them but preached Christ crucified and called them to repentance, that their sins might be blotted out, and the Lord accompanied the word with great power. Those victims of the rum bottle also became quiet and gave attention. The tavern keeper, J. Ernst, was confounded and shut his bar, allowing no one to go in. The hearts of many were "pricked" and many eyes became tearful. After the sermon Father Staebler said to the preacher: "If you want to preach here after this, then preach in my house," which was only fifty rods away from the tavern. This offer was gladly accepted, and the Gospel trumpet was blown soon afterward in Staebler's house. Bro. Staebler had four sons and two daughters who were grown up and yet at home, but were soon converted to God. Later on two of the sons went forth into the ministry, one of whom has already entered into the joy of the Lord. Besides these several grandchildren are in the service of the Evangelical Association, in the Canada, New York and Iowa Conferences.

#### § 12. Our first Church Edifice in Canada. A Stroke of the Devil.

Bro. Harlacher wrote with reference to his street-preaching in Petersburg: "As I had put a hole through the devil's drum, his music was spoiled!" Many persons were converted in the meetings in Staebler's house, and the praises of God were sounded aloud. But Satan raged because so many successful attacks had been made on his kingdom. The prince of darkness attempted through his vassals a veritable *coup de etat* upon the then leader of the work, Bro. Harlacher.

In the year 1841, on the 25th of September, the first Church of the Evangelical Association in Berlin was dedicated. Christian Hummel of Buffalo Circuit, N. Y., officiated. On Sunday evening, 20 persons came to the altar of prayer, of whom many realized that their feet had been placed on the rock of salvation, and a new song was put into their mouths, to praise their God. This was an "old Evangelical" Church dedication!

This was also the first Evangelical Church edifice in Canada and became the birth-place of many souls, who pressed into the kingdom of God. But the enemies of the work of God were at a loss to know how to give vent to their anger on account of this.

About one month after the above mentioned dedication several servants of Satan conspired together, and on a Saturday evening erected a gibbet in a street in the center of the town; then they stuffed an old man's dress with straw, to which they attached a paper with Bro. Harlacher's name and several ugly epithets on it, and hung this effigy upon the gallows? On Sunday morning people passed along this street and were astonished at this spectacle, until one of the brethren cut the rope and let the effigy drop on the ground. After a little while the boys set it on fire. On Monday Bro. Harlacher came into town and saw the gibbet still standing. Now the report was spread that Harlacher had hanged himself, and many people believed it. A young brother heard it already on Monday in Dundas, 30 miles away, where it was emphatically stated to be true. This brother, thinking the enemies had perhaps killed the missionary and then hanged him, went on foot to Berlin to ascertain the truth about it. How glad he was when he learned that his spiritual father was alive and full of joy!

But what had the devil gained by this outrage? It turned out to be a very effective defeat for his kingdom. Several of those rowdies, who had assisted in hanging Bro. Harlacher in effigy, were seized by remorse and converted to God, and at least two of them became preachers of the Gospel and led other souls to the Lord!

From the foregoing examples we learn that the pioneer labors of Bro. Harlacher laid the foundation of the work in many places. These onerous preliminaries produced glorious results. Within the territories then worked up under great difficulties and hardships, the Canada Conference has now at least 12 fields of labor and many strong congregations. From among those new converts the Lord called several into the Gospel field, who have labored with blessed success, of whom we would mention as examples the brethren William Schmidt and Solomon Weber, who both served for many years as presiding elders.

### § 13. An Outlook.

If we take the towns of Waterloo and Berlin, which almost adjoin each other, as a center, at those times, the surrounding work was situated about as follows: Westward 36 miles until within 6 miles of Stratford. Between this lay Petersburg, Hamburg and Kleinknecht's as chief appointments. Preaching was had in dwelling-houses, school-houses, barns, in the woods and streets. When a school-house was closed the preacher usually took his stand before the door and preached on the text: "And

the door was shut !” which often caused the opening of another door as a result.

Southwestward the field extended to a log house where the town of Tavistock now stands. During a meeting, when a sermon was delivered on Acts 26, 18, a man exclaimed : “ I have been a member of the \* \* \* Church already for 14 years, but only now I learn what true religion is ! ”

Southeastward it extended to Blenheim. The roads leading thither led through swamps which were covered with branches of trees ; sometimes these were found swimming about in the water, which made riding on horseback quite dangerous. But the labors of the preachers were not in vain ; the divine blessing rested upon them richly, sinners were converted, and later on a Blenheim Circuit was formed. There was also preaching 4 miles east of Brantford. The distance from Berlin to the latter place was 30 miles. A family named Orth had a deaf-mute son who was converted in Blenheim, and was so happy that he knew not how to express it—with one hand he would point upward, the other he would lay on his heart. This sign could be understood by all, and was also a proof of the operation of the Holy Spirit.

Eastward from Berlin the work extended to York, Vaughn, Markham and Whitechurch. Appointments between were Hespeler, 10 miles from Berlin, from thence 12 miles to Morriston ; from thence to York 40 miles and from thence to Whitechurch 22 miles.

During the Summer the preachers could travel in a straight line through a rocky ridge. At the hot noon-time they would rest at a stream under shady trees ; horse-feed was carried along, and a little lunch also. Another course led through Waterdown. On this route the preachers would often stop with Bro. Engelhart, a German Methodist, who manifested a deep interest in the conversion of the Germans. At this place Bishop John Seybert and Bro. William Schmidt met for the first time.

In a northern direction the work extended to what is now St. Jacobs. Preaching was had in the houses of the Fathers Hauch and Yost.

Northwestward it was 14 miles to the so-called “ King’s Forest.”

All of this constituted a very large circuit (in 1841) ; traveling was exceedingly difficult and during some seasons of the year even quite dangerous. The people were poor and the salary very small—\$43 a year—but God Jehovah was with his servants, and they were often greatly rejoiced over sinners who repented. New doors were opened continually for the preaching of the Gospel.

The fearful moral deterioration of the German population, which made a thorough reformation so indispensably necessary, not only continued among those who opposed the work and in such sections as had not yet been reached by the Evangelical missionaries, but was growing still worse. The chief cause of this tendency was the unconverted ministers who were mostly fugitives from justice. Most of them were drunkards and de-

bauched. They conducted themselves not unfrequently in such an outrageous, indecent manner at weddings, funerals, and even at the celebration of the holy sacrament that we dare not describe it! These clergy ("Pfarrer") were very voluble in slandering the Evangelical preachers, but when brought to a test they took to ignominious flight! But thank God! a better day is now shining!

#### § 14. Great Awakening at "Twenty."

Among the Mennonites in the southern part of Upper Canada, now Ontario, the Lord commenced to work mightily, especially in the section of the so-called "Twenty," now Campden, about 20 miles northward from Niagara Falls. This awakening Bishop Seybert was wont to call the "great work of conversion among the Mennonites." Bro. Samuel N. Moyer, who is now (1893) a presiding elder in the Canada Conference, furnishes a very interesting report on the beginning and progress of the work in that part of Canada from 1841 until recent times, which we here reproduce substantially.

The first minister of the Evangelical Association who labored regularly in this section was the sainted Philip Schwilly, who was preacher on the Blackcreek Circuit in the year 1841. He preached once or twice in the school-house on the "Fly Road," but when he came again, he found the school-house locked against him, and when he was informed that he would not be allowed to preach in it, he held his services in the woods near by. Later on he preached in the house of an European German, named Schock.

Bro. Jacob Gross was the next, and was followed by Bro. Frederick Scharffe. Bro. Gross wrote to his successor that "there is a section in the neighborhood of the Sonntag's Class, called Twenty, which is a Mennonite settlement, where I preached several times, there are good prospects for conversions." According to statements by such as were present, those meetings were largely attended, and many dated their conviction from them, although they were converted at a later time.

In the Autumn of 1848, a great revival took place among these Mennonites. The person used as an instrument by the Lord was a young man named Jacob M. Moyer, a member of the Mennonite Church, who was a brother to the renowned, active Evangelist, Samuel M. Moyer. This young man was soundly converted at home, and then, being full of faith and the Holy Ghost, immediately began to exhort people with great earnestness to repentance and conversion. Thus he went from house to house, and also testified for Jesus, wherever he found an opportunity. Yea, the love of Christ constrained him to travel to Bucks County, Pennsylvania, for the purpose of turning the erring ones to the Saviour. His labors caused a remarkable stir and awakening at the "Twenty." Several persons found rest for their souls, but many went along mourning and seeking for years before they found the precious peace of God. This re-

vival led to a division in that large Mennonite congregation. Most of the penitents and new converts followed the lead of Father Gross, Bishop of the Mennonites; they held prayer-meetings, experience-meetings, etc. They also continued the Sunday-school which had been held for a year or two by a pious man named Joseph Frey. This man had been brought to God through the preaching of Schwilby, Gross and some Methodist preachers, and made it an object to labor among the young people.

When the people were thus prepared and desirous for the word of salvation, Bro. Frederick Scharffe came upon this field of labor. In the beginning he preached in the house of a Lutheran named Martin Link to large meetings. The people, who were mostly Mennonites, listened eagerly and were deeply touched by the word of God. Already at his second visit he prayed with some seekers and could rejoice over a new convert, in the person of Mrs. Link.

The room at Link's soon became too small, and when Bro. Scharffe at the close of a meeting inquired whether some one else would open his house for the next meeting, in two weeks, the answer came from William Hippel, who was a Mennonite: "I will open my house." He had already some experience in divine life and was very solicitous for the salvation of his fellowmen, but especially his brethren of the Mennonite persuasion.

At the appointed time the memorable meeting was held in Hippel's house. The large, roomy house was crowded with people, but could not contain all the masses that had come from far and near, many had come 10 miles. Bishop Gross and his family and most of his adherents were also present. Many of the opposite party among the Mennonites were also there.

Bro. Scharffe took the text Jeremiah 8, 22: "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" and preached the word of God with great freedom and in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. The word penetrated many hearts. About 15 persons fell on their knees and continued to agonize and pray until the Lord gave the new song into their mouth. A great number found the pearl of great price and began to speak with great eloquence, full of the Holy Ghost, of the grace of God, to the astonishment and great wonder of the people present.

There was a remarkable commotion among the mass of people, and the powers of darkness began to rebel. Some bad men wanted to press into the house and bring out to her mother by force, a penitent daughter, but they did not succeed. Then the woman herself, the mother of a respected family, pressed in through the crowd for this purpose, but the daughter said to her mother: "I feel that I must be converted; I think if the day of Judgment were here, then we all could pray." The daughter soon found the precious preace of God, gave a powerful testimony for Jesus, witnessing to the assurance of pardon and adoption, and became the instru-

ment of the conversion of her mother a short time after. A woman, who had been seeking salvation for two years, also experienced a sound conversion, and, being full of the Holy Spirit, spoke as with a tongue of fire, exhorting with a loud voice the old men, women and leaders of the Menno-nite Church to repentance and conversion in a manner never heard before. The meeting could not be closed before two o'clock in the morning.\*

The next meeting was held by Bro. Scharffe at the house of John Hippel. Here also a big crowd of people gathered, and God's children had a great victory.

At the following meeting in a church in Jordan the sacrament of holy baptism was administered to a number of adult persons for the first time by an Evangelical preacher. Soon afterward Bro. Scharffe received members into the Church for the first time. William Hippel, Joseph Frey, Samuel Frey and wife, Jacob Hauser and wife, Elisabeth Gross, and others, 15 in all, joined the Evangelical Association. In a short time still more followed, and at the end of the Conference year a large membership had been gathered.

On Sunday the 17th of July, 1850, the first Church of the Ev. Association of this place was dedicated by William Schmidt, presiding elder. In 1872 the congregation built a large brick church in the village of Campden, which was renovated and beautified in 1887, and is one of the finest and best Churches in the Canada Conference.

The congregation numbers about 130 members, carries on an exemplary Sunday-school of about 220 scholars. Seven or eight men have gone forth from her midst as preachers of the Gospel of whom four are in the active service and labor with blessed success in the Canada Conference. This is the Lord's doings, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

The work in Canada achieved such conquests and victories through the labors of the faithful and self-sacrificing servants of God—among whom were William Schmidt, Solomon Weber, Theobald Schneider and others, as first fruits in Canada—that it could be formed into a presiding elder district, in 1847. The Lord led them on from victory to victory, so that in 1863 an annual conference could be organized, having now about 50 itinerants and 6000 members, after many hundreds, probably thousands, have emigrated into the western States and territories of the Union, and hundreds have died happy in the Lord. And still the Canada Conference is moving forward in the name of the Lord.†

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\*) During this wonderful time of salvation in the house the "ungodly" raged fearfully outside. Several wicked men hanged Bro. Hippel's valuable dog out of revenge because he had opened his house for the meeting.

†) The further extension of the work in that country will be properly noticed in the second volume of this history.

## HISTORY OF THE PUBLISHING HOUSE OF THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION.

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The Publishing House is the oldest and, probably, the most blessed institution of the Evangelical Association, and deserves to be considered in a separate section of this history. The very first beginnings of it arose in the heart of a man who was consecrated from his youthful years up to old age to the work of God in the Evangelical Association—the Rev. John Dreisbach.

In his diary he writes, in the year 1815, as follows: "On the 30th of November, I journeyed to Philadelphia for the purpose of buying a printing apparatus for the Association," which he intended to *give* to the Church. During this transaction he says: "The Lord stood by me with his blessing and I felt divine peace." The printing press, types, etc. cost \$366; the chest into which it was packed amounted to \$3.64; the trip and lodging expenses, \$5.30; a strap to be buckled around the chest, 14 cents. Total, \$375.08.

On the 3rd of January, 1816, Bro. Dreisbach also bought the "gilding apparatus for the book-bindery for our printing establishment, from the bookprinter, Christian Gleim, in Harrisburg, Pa.," for \$21.50. On the 15th, which was according to the thermometer, the coldest day in 15 years, he rode on a sled to Philadelphia, and arrived there in the evening. During this day he was both "tempted" and "blessed." On the 16th he paid "some thirty dollars to the founder, Mr. Ronaldson, for types, and also bought two kegs of printers' ink for \$14, besides other articles belonging to a book-bindery." But now he ascertained that he had not enough funds left for going home, but his host loaned him \$3. During the night it rained very hard and the snow passed rapidly away. On next morning Dreisbach loaded a keg of type, weighing 250 pounds, two kegs of printers' ink, weighing 30 pounds, and a pair of heavy pasteboard scissors upon a sleigh, but was compelled to stop already at Nicetown, four miles from the city, at the house of Peter Wagner and unload those articles, leaving orders that they be sent per post-stage to Reading. He then slid along on his sleigh the best he could through mud and over stones back to Reading. This is a specimen among many of the difficulties of those days. And it also shows the small beginnings of our now mighty publishing interests.

In the following June, 1816, the Conference took the following action, as recorded in the official protocol: "Were elected: John Dreisbach, Henry Niebel, Solomon Miller, Adam Ettinger, Daniel Bertolet, Philip

Breidenstein, and Christopher Spangler, as a Book Commission, to take in hand and manage the printing and book-binding business, and all the interests belonging thereto, for the Evangelical Association, so long as the Annual Preachers' Conference may see proper; and these seven men shall annually hold a conference, in order to conduct their management correctly; and they shall furnish a correct account to the Annual Preachers' Conference of the entire book business."

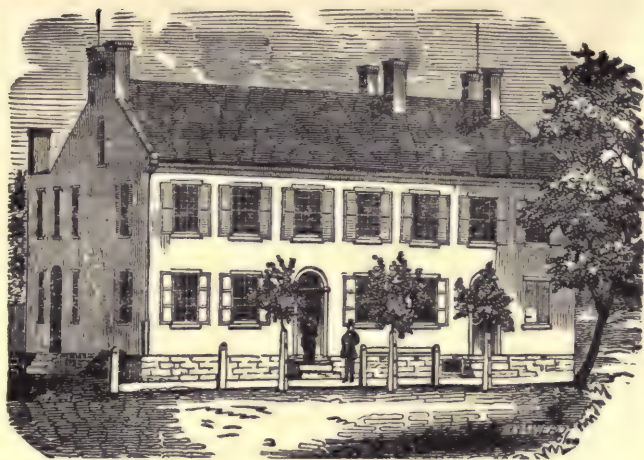
The General Conference, held in October, 1816, elected Solomon Miller as chief manager and Henry Niebel as assistant. A building was procured in New Berlin, Pa., 20 by 26 feet in dimensions, one and one-half story high, and in this the business was commenced. But it was soon ascertained that the Association was yet too weak to support such an institution, the business did not earn enough profits and hence soon came to an end.



View of the first Publishing House—1816.

The furniture was then sold, and George Miller, who was a printer and book-binder, thenceforth did the work for the Church. The debts were gradually paid, and when in 1837 the Publishing House enterprise was revived, there were several hundred dollars in the treasury, but a dividend had never been made to the Conferences.

In 1836 the *Christliche Botschafter* was founded. As that paper succeeded beyond all expectation, and the Church had grown in membership to about 7,000, who desired good literature, it was resolved by General Conference, chiefly through the efforts made by Rev. William W. Orwig, that in the coming year a Publishing House should be founded in New Berlin, Pa. Orwig was then appointed collector, to collect funds for this purpose. He found very liberal hearts and hands wherever he went. The members were rather more courageous in this matter than the preachers. The trustees who were appointed by the Conference: Philip Wagner, John Rank and William W. Orwig, bought a suitable building, arranged the business, and printing was soon begun and zealously carried on.



View of the second Publishing House—1837.

Already a year previous committees were appointed to examine the following manuscripts and books :

1. Manuscript by Samuel Miller, entitled : "Das Kernwesen der Erloesung durch Christum." (The Kernel of the Redemption through Christ.)
2. Lorenzo Dow's "Chain of Reason,"—both were ordered to be printed.
3. The General Conference also resolved that 2000 copies of John C. Reisner's Primer and Reader be printed.

In 1837 it was ordered that 1500 copies of Thomas A. Kempis' "Imitation of Christ," 1000 copies of Miller's "Practical Christianity," 1000 copies of Vogelbach's German Grammar, 500 copies of the Constitution of the Missionary Society, and 1000 Sunday-school tickets, etc. be printed. Soon afterward followed the publication of a German pocket Bible, Collier's "Introduction to the Holy Scriptures," "Fletcher's Appeal," etc.

In a few years hundreds of thousands of copies of books were issued, of which but few remained in stock, and the receipts exceeded the expenditures very considerably.

It will be of great interest to get a glimpse of the income and expenditures of the Publishing House inclusive of the dividends to the Annual Conferences for the support of poor and superannuated preachers and their widows and orphans and partly also the salary of the Bishops from the year 1837 until 1887 inclusive. It will be evident that the profits of the House have been much larger than these dividends, because a large sum had annually to be retained in the treasury for the proper prosecution and enlargement of the business, and the purchase of ground for the erection of more buildings, etc.

The following table will give an approximate view of this prosperous business.

Year.	Receipts.	Dividend.	Year.	Receipts.	Dividend.
1837	\$ 2 598 47 $\frac{1}{4}$	\$ 500.00	1863	\$ 27,259.82	\$ 1,350.00
1838	2,562.47 $\frac{1}{4}$	500.00	1864	40,042.12	1,200.00
1839	2,598.30 $\frac{1}{2}$		1865	43,973.25	1,200.00
1840	3,643.76 $\frac{1}{4}$	1,200.00	1866	47,917.87	1,800.00
1841	3,762.52 $\frac{1}{4}$	900.00	1867	48,584.88	1,800.00
1842	5,271.20 $\frac{3}{4}$		1868	54,018.78	
1843	5,850.03	1,707.45	1869	73,147.76	1,400.00
1844	4,656.18	1,200.00	1870	72,113.65	2,100.00
1845	4,781.13 $\frac{1}{4}$	800.00	1871	91,850.06	2,800.00
1846	4,854.82 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,600.00	1872	96,839.24	2,850.00
1847	6,693.75	1,400.00	1873	113,517.50	4,900.31
1848	5,792.10	2,000.00	1874	115,157.06	3,250.00
1849	6,798.11	500.00	1875	120,000.00	3,980.00
1850	7,279.60	1,500.00	1876	130,616.03	3,900.00
1851	7,059.20	1,500.00	1877	138,689.92	6,301.30
1852	9,333.29	2,100.00	1878	161,046.77	6,750.00
1853	11,285.31	2,300.00	1879	142,357.08	9,443.00
1854	8,665.95	1,400.00	1880	157,088.91	11,381.54
1855	14,796.46	2,450.00	1881	181,962.19	13,173.68
1856	14,567.75	2,800.00	1882	202,144.36	19,529.92
1857	14,763.28	2,800.00	1883	209,901.23	20,302.00
1858	14,851.31	2,800.00	1884	194,353.67	19,532.79
1859	13,919.01	2,800.00	1885	200,424.04	19,629.46
1860	20,935.34	3,150.00	1886	202,496.15	20,058.00
1861	20,469.16	2,250.00	1887	205,145.76	18,521.41
1862	28,307.04	2,713.50			
				\$3,316,735.05	\$240,024.36

In the year 1879 there was \$10,000 loaned out of the profits of the business to the branch Publishing House in Stuttgart, Germany, which proved to be a great help to that institution.

As an example of the annual amount of money handled by the Publishing House we insert the receipts and expenditures in the quadrennium of 1884-1887, as follows:

1884.	Receipts,	\$194,353.67	}	. . .	\$359,804.75.
	Expenditures,	165,451.08			
1885.	Receipts,	\$200,424.04	}	. . .	\$369,277.18.
	Expenditures,	168,853.14			
1886.	Receipts,	\$203,496.15	}	. . .	\$373,166.50.
	Expenditures,	169,670.35			
1887.	Receipts,	\$205,145.76	}	. . .	\$372,835.84.
	Expenditures,	167,690.08			

Total exchange in this quadrennium: \$1,475,084.27.

Thus during these fifty years, which include also the years of the small beginnings, the income exceeded three and a quarter million dollars, and the dividends to the conferences for the support of the poor and aged preachers and their widows and orphans amounted to nearly a

quarter of a million dollars! Besides the total value of the publishing interests and properties was calculated in 1887 to be nearly half a million! Debts—none!

This representation is limited to the financial feature of the Publishing House, but who can estimate the blessings which it has spread through its publications for time and eternity. No pen is competent for this.

Although the removal of the Publishing House from New Berlin, Pa. to Cleveland, Ohio, and several enlargements and new buildings belong chronologically to the second volume of this history, it will be more convenient for the reader to see a brief summary of those events here.

As the Association was growing rapidly and the business became extended, especially in the West and Canada, the inconvenience of New Berlin as the place of business was strongly realized. It was quite distant from railroads, and mail arrangements were insufficient, hence the propriety of removing the Establishment to some large city became a subject of animated discussion in the Church papers. The General Conference of 1851 resolved that the removal should take place on the condition that the cost of the new property—grounds and buildings—should not exceed the sum of \$12,000, and of this at least threefourths (\$9,000) must first be secured by good subscriptions. This was a wise provision. The election by a majority of votes resulted in the choice of Cleveland, Ohio, and as a committee on removal the following brethren were appointed: Joseph Long, Henry Fischer, John Dreisbach, William W. Orwig, John G. Zinser and George F. Spreng. This removal found much favor in the Church and the \$9,000 were soon secured. The grounds cost \$4,360 and the buildings \$8,000. This building was at that time regarded as something magnificent in Cleveland, and the chief paper of the city published an extensive description of it as such.

Growth is at the same time enlargement and requires more room, and thus this building also became too small for the business and another stately edifice was erected on a newly purchased ground on corner of Vine and Woodland in 1874, which cost over \$40,000, for which the money was in the treasury. (See the view on page 437.)

Soon afterward a new four-story building arose in the rear of the main edifice, fronting on Harmon Street, to obtain room for the large presses and the further extension of the business, because the building of 1854 had become too small for the machinery, etc. This addition cost about \$18,000.

Toward the year 1884 the room again became too narrow, hence the building of 1854 was taken down and a much larger one—also a four-story stately edifice—arose on the corner of Woodland Avenue and Harmon Street, which cost the sum of \$30,000, about \$10,000 less than the other building, although this latter is considerably larger. Certain favorable circumstances, together with good management, were the cause of this large



View of the third Publishing House—1854.

saving. The whole front of this magnificent building measures 123 feet on Woodland Avenue, and the depth is 100 feet. The interior arrangement comprises everything that belongs to a first-class book, newspaper, binding, electrotyping and printing business, leaving scarcely anything to be desired. The reader will please take a good look at the view of the present Publishing House and he will see that we have in nowise overstated the facts.

Besides the blessing of God, resting so visibly on this institution the following co-operating causes of its prosperity deserve also to be mentioned :

1. From the very beginning the rule to make but few debts was adopted and practiced. The cost of founding the House and also of its subsequent removal was almost entirely covered by voluntary donations.
2. The salaries of the officers and editors were always small, scarcely half the amount paid in other similar institutions.
3. There is but one Publishing House in the Evangelical Association in America, which, of course, is supported by all parts of the Church on this continent.



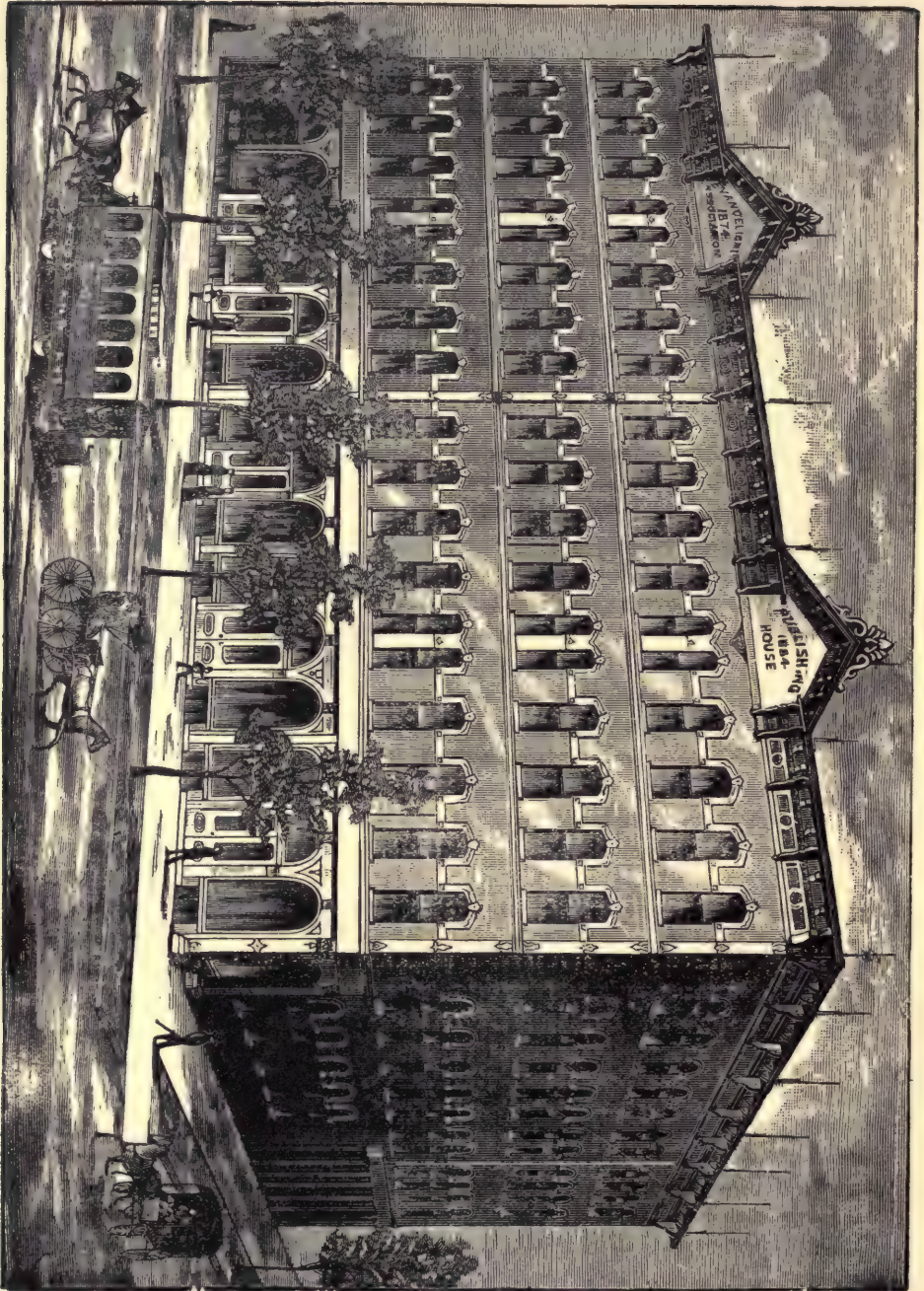
View of the New Building of 1874.

4. The management has been always conducted with good business tact and strict honesty. The managing agents have always been preachers, and their successful management has been one of the reasons why there has been so little agitation among us for lay delegation among the lay-members of the Church.

5. We have a progressive, reading membership who want a good supply of church-papers and good books.

6. We have excellent church papers and magazines.

7. We have generally active, diligent and successful agents who work for the House. Long may it flourish !



The Publishing House at present.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHRISTLICHE BOTSCHAFTER.

This grand Church paper appeared for the first time in January, 1836, having but 700 subscribers, at a time when the Church numbered about 5,000 members. Adam Ettinger and George Miller were the first editor and publisher. During that year the number of subscribers rose to 1,100. Although small in form—8½ inches wide and 10½ inches long, having 8 pages—and in a literary respect somewhat imperfect, it contained many articles of sterling worth, both original and selected, and also reports of awakenings and revivals on the fields of labor, and some Church news. This wholesome literature made the paper a very welcome visitor, yea, so inspiring was it to some of the readers that they sent in not only their gratulations in prose but also in poetry. Many subscribers not only preserved it, but had its volumes bound and placed in their libraries; this was continued by many of them until later enlargements of the form of the paper made it impracticable. The paper appeared at first monthly at the annual price of 75 cents.

Toward the close of the first year Adam Ettinger resigned the editorship, and General Conference—it being the sixth—held on the 14th of November, 1836, elected William W. Orwig in his place as editor, who entered upon the discharge of this office in April, 1837. Bro. Orwig had been the chief advocate of the founding of the Botschafter and Publishing House, and now he was also appointed collector for the House, editor of the paper, chief manager, and was with two others also appointed trustee for the erection of the Publishing House—work enough for three men—with a salary of \$150 per year.\* Bro. Orwig was at that time far the ablest and most energetic man among the younger portion of the ministry. Under his editorship the paper made considerable progress in several respects. General Conference in 1839, elected Charles Hammer as managing agent, thus the editor could apply more of his time and attention to the paper.

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\*) It may be quite interesting, and in some respects also just, to state here what amounts of salary Bro. Orwig received during the first six years of his service in the Publishing House, part of which time he served both as editor and managing agent:

1837	.	.	\$150.00.	1840	.	.	\$175.00.
1838	.	.	150.00.	1841	.	.	190.00.
1839	.	.	175.00.	1842	.	.	190.00.
Additional by General Conference				.	.	.	100.00.

In the beginning of 1840 the *Botschafter* appeared semi-monthly enlarged in form and the price was raised to one dollar, to be paid within the year, but those who neglected thus to pay were charged \$1.25. Many friends of the paper feared this arrangement would operate detrimentally, but the editor was soon able to inform these faint-hearted ones that the *Botschafter* had commenced its fifth year with 2,070 subscribers and there had been less discontinuances at the close of the past year than in former years.

In April, 1842, Hammer resigned the office of managing agent and Thomas Buck was elected in his place, who, however, died already in the following month of October. On the 1st of October the paper appeared for the first time in mourning. Bro. William W. Orwig was again appointed as the General Book Agent, and William Bersch associated with him as a helper in the editing of the paper, who from that time forth for many years was a useful and faithful assistant in the Publishing House.

The General Conference of 1843 again elected Adam Ettinger as editor because Orwig, after seven years service retired from this work, and John C. Reisner was elected General Book Agent. Ettinger used a sharp pen, and as the Evangelical Association about this time was attacked by several younger ecclesiastical papers of other denominations, as also by several pamphleteers, he dealt out to them such sturdy blows that they began to realize something quite strange and retreated without ceremony.

The ninth General Conference (1847) elected Nicholas Gehr as editor of the *Botschafter*, Henry Fischer as Chief Book Agent, and William Bersch was elected regularly as assistant to the editor, chiefly because Gehr had also to edit the *Evangelical Messenger*, which was called into existence by this Conference. Mr. Gehr had served a little over one year when his resignation was suddenly published in the *Botschafter* of May 1, 1849. From this announcement it appears that he had changed his views concerning the doctrine of entire sanctification, and that he strongly leaned toward the views of the German Reformed Church in Pennsylvania, which he then immediately joined. John G. Zinser was then elected as editor of the *Botschafter*, and the *Messenger* was entrusted to Henry Fischer, having William Bersch for his assistant. But Bro. Zinser declined the appointment. Bro. Fischer then called the Book-committee together, which met on the 21st of June, 1849, and again elected William W. Orwig as editor of the *Botschafter*. With the issue of August 1, 1849, Orwig again entered upon the editorship which he had declined five years before. The *Botschafter* prospered continually amidst these disturbing changes.

With the fifteenth volume (1850) a new chapter in the history of the paper opened, it was again enlarged and received new types. It now numbered about 4,000 subscribers and gained continually in regard to solidity, prestige and influence.

The tenth General Conference, October, 1851, decreed the removal of the Publishing House from New Berlin, Pa., to Cleveland, Ohio, and ordered also that from that time forth 26 numbers should be issued annually instead of 24 as had been the case until then. Bro. Orwig was again elected editor and General Book Agent, and John G. Zinser as assistant editor of the *Botschafter*. The latter, however, could only serve about one year, when he was compelled to resign on account of failing eyesight. Bro. Orwig then, assisted by Bro. Bersch, served as editor of both papers and General Book Agent until April, 1854. Certainly more than enough work of an exhaustive nature for one man!

The West Pa. Conference, in March, 1853, called Rev. Charles G. Koch of the Pittsburg Conference as editor of the *Christliche Botschafter* in place of Bro. Orwig who had resigned, and as the Publishing House was to be removed to Cleveland, Ohio, he also resigned as agent and Bro. Hammer was again elected to this position, who, however, immediately resigned, whereupon Rev. Michael F. Meesz of the East Pa. Conference was elected, who also resigned. A year later (1854) Bro. Hammer was again elected to this position. Bro. Orwig departed from the *Botschafter* addressing its readers, on the 20th of April, in the following words: "This is the second time that we retire from the editorship. The first time we served from April, 1837, to the close of December, 1843—almost seven years. The second time we were called hither in July, 1849, under discouraging circumstances, and we have now in all served nearly twelve years as editor of the *Botschafter*." Bro. Koch then took the editorial chair, on May 1, 1853, and sent out an excellent salutation under the heading: "In the Name of Jesus." Bro. Henry Fischer, who had served alternately as editor of the *Botschafter* and *Messenger*, died in the Lord on the 20th of January, 1854.

On the 5th of April, 1854, the *Botschafter* appeared for the last time in New Berlin, Pa., in its 19th year; then it was transferred to Cleveland. After this removal Bro. Hammer entered upon his duties as General Book Agent.

The General Conference held in 1855, at Lebanon, Pa., re-elected Bro. Koch as editor for four years, and also Bro. Hammer as General Book Agent. It was resolved that payment in advance should be adopted. By the credit system much money had been lost, but this new arrangement proved itself very practical, and also just to the Publishing House. The "*Christliche Kinderfreund*" was also founded by this Conference and placed under the editorship of Bro. Koch, who was a very industrious laborer and an excellent editor.

The General Conference in Naperville, Ill., 1859, elected Bro. Koch as editor for four years longer, but during this term his health began to fail. In the year 1861 a new and very important arrangement went into effect—the *Botschafter* appeared weekly since November, without raising its price of \$1.00 per annum.

As Bro. Koch's failing health did not permit his re-election, Bro. Orwig was elected in 1863, and Bro. Hammer again re-elected as General Book Agent. After the expiration of this term (1867), Rudolph Dubs was elected editor and Bro. Orwig General Book Agent. At the same time the *Botschafter* was much enlarged and its price raised to \$2.00. Dubs was an energetic editor, and a notable progress was the result. During Dubs' time of service there was a flourishing period in the Evangelical Association; German immigration was quite strong and the *Botschafter* gained many subscribers. Bro. Orwig resigned his office in the Spring of 1870 and Rev. William F. Schneider, of the Wisconsin Conference was installed by the Board of Publication as his successor, and was also elected by the General Conference in 1871, held in Naperville, Ill.

At the General Conference in Philadelphia, 1875, Rudolph Dubs was elected as Bishop and Bro. Martin Lauer was elected editor of the *Botschafter* and Bro. Schneider re-elected as agent. The latter, however, was called from his post by death, near the close of his term.

Next Bro. M. Lauer was elected General Book Agent, and Bro. William Horn as editor of the *Botschafter* by the General Conference of 1879. He served continually until 1891. In 1884 the *Botschafter* was again enlarged and its form changed to sixteen pages, so that it can be handled, opened and closed like a book.

The *Botschafter* is not only the oldest German Church paper in this country but also the largest and cheapest, perhaps in the whole world. Under the editorship of Bro. Horn it again made considerable progress.

On the 6th of July, 1885, a splendidly illustrated Jubilee issue appeared, in which a paragraph reads as follows: "At present the *Botschafter* is at least five times larger than it was at its first issue, and now appears weekly instead of monthly. If the subscription price should now be calculated according to quantity, the paper which then cost 75 cents would now come to \$15.00. We may boldly say that this paper is not exceeded in regard to price and contents by any other paper."

As near as can be ascertained the development of the list of subscribers from its start until now was as follows:

1836	700	1845	3,000	1862	11,114	1874	19,966	1884	22,450
1837	1,100	1849	3,500	1863	13,248	1875	20,282	1887	22,500
1838	1,700	1850	4,000	1867	13,296	1879	19,400	1888	22,600
1840	2,070	1854	5,500	1871	17,280	1883	22,100	1889	23,500

## BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EVANGELICAL MESSENGER.

In the latter part of the fourth decade of the present century the Evangelical Association strongly felt the need of an English Church organ. Already the General Conference in 1843 took this subject into serious consideration and resolved "that an English paper be published as soon as practicable." But it proved to be slow in maturing. The causes of this were given in the first issue of the Messenger, as follows: "Several reasons could be mentioned why our paper did not appear sooner. The desired and necessary number of subscribers was not obtained. Probably also the issue was delayed because of the want of the necessary ambition. This fact, it seems to us to be admitted by the extra zeal manifested by those who are interested in the prosperity of our only and so much needed English Church paper."

The Messenger appeared in 1847, having 800 subscribers. As to its outward appearance it was a large sheet of four pages and 16 columns of reading matter. It contained no advertisements, was issued every two weeks, and cost \$1.00 a year. The first editor was Nicholas Gehr, who also edited the *Christliche Botschafter*, but resigned his position about a year afterward and withdrew from the Church on account of doctrinal differences, and for other reasons. The then existing Board soon after that—in May, 1849—appointed Henry Fischer as the second editor, who had already since Gehr's withdrawal edited the paper, and William Bersch was appointed assistant. In 1851, the English paper received another form, and thereby became quite similar to the *Botschafter*. In 1853, Bro. Fischer became sick, so that in the month of October he had to cease from his labors and on the 20th, 1854, he entered into his eternal rest. He was a highly esteemed, godly man, and his departure was generally mourned. During his sickness Bro. Orwig attended to his duties. In March, 1854, Rev. J. L. W. Seibert was appointed as editor, who entered upon his appointment as the third editor, in April, 1854, with the 8th issue of the seventh volume. This number appeared in Cleveland, Ohio, whither the Publishing House had meanwhile been removed. But Seibert's editorial career was very brief. He thought that he ought to resign for considerations of health, which he did already on the 13th of September, 1854. The Board of Publication then appointed the highly esteemed Rev. John Dreisbach as the fourth editor, who served until May, 1856, when he was compelled by reason of old age and feebleness to resign at the session of the Ohio Conference, whereupon that Conference appointed Rev. Theophilus G. Clewell, of the East Pa. Conference, who was then the fifth editor of the *Messen-*

ger. During the service of Clewell many changes of the paper were introduced. From 1847 until 1864 the price of the paper had been \$1.00, but in the month of August in the last named year it was raised to \$1.75 and thus remained until 1861. In 1861 the Messenger was promoted to a weekly paper. When Clewell resigned his office in 1871 the Board of Publication appointed Rev. Reuben Yeakel in his place who was then the sixth editor, and Rev. Aaron W. Orwig was associated with him as assistant. But the subsequent General Conference, held in Naperville, Illinois elected Mr. Yeakel as Bishop, and placed Rev. Jacob Hartzler in the editorial chair, he being the seventh editor, who served until 1879 when General Conference elected Rev. Henry B. Hartzler as his successor, who was the eighth in the succession. His career ended with deposition by General Conference in 1887. That Conference elected Rev. Samuel P. Spreng as editor, who is the ninth incumbent of this office. In 1884, the form of the paper was also changed to the book form, and thereby again somewhat enlarged.

The Messenger commenced in 1847 with 800 subscribers; in 1854 they numbered 2,354; in 1863 they had increased to 6,625, but four years afterward the number was reduced to 6,576. In 1889 it numbered about 12,000, and was gaining many new patrons.

## RETROSPECTIVE REMARKS.

We have now arrived at the close of the fourth period and therewith also at the conclusion of this first volume of the history of the Evangelical Association. We have gone through one century—1750 to 1850.—and have contemplated both the relative previous history and the real beginning of our Church, we have observed above all things the marvelous, overruling hand of the Lord, who causes all things to work together, so that “men might be saved, and come to a knowledge of the truth.”

We have also seen, especially during the last described period, that, besides the foundational and pioneering mission-work of the Evangelical Association, the work of perfecting the organization and completing the denominational edifice of this Church was also zealously prosecuted. With the growth of the number of members and preachers, as also in temporal property, the spirit of enterprise kept pace in all respects, and the work of the Lord prospered gloriously.

We say with all deliberation—the work of the Lord. The Spirit of the Lord was resting upon those Evangelical preachers and their motto was: “To save souls, is our calling.” In those years we heard Bishop Seybert joyously express his gratitude to God that we had “not one unconverted preacher in our ministry,” as he believed. They were men whom God had called into the work, who, though not being faultless angels, were certainly men of God, whose entire ambition and earnest efforts were aimed at “working the work of the Lord,” as Paul the apostle said for himself and Timothy, 1 Cor. 16, 10. Not to gather earthly treasures nor to obtain high titles as attachments to their names, not to strive for high offices and then “lord it over God’s heritage,” but to bring the greatest possible number of sinners to Christ, lead believers on unto perfection in Christ Jesus, and thus gain “many stars into their heavenly crowns”—which was then an Evangelical proverb—that was the goal of their ambition. They looked unto the recompense of the reward, and with Paul pressed forward to obtain the high prize of their calling in Christ Jesus.

The manner of preaching of those men was certainly not a superficial, sensational effort for effect. Far from it. We insert an extract from an article which the sainted Bro. Charles Hammer wrote shortly before his departure to glory. He describes the manner of preaching and working of the Evangelical preachers during that period as follows:

“The subjects of their preaching were chiefly as follows: The great Fall and Depravity of Man; Redemption through Christ; Genuine Repentance; Saving Faith; Regeneration by the Holy Spirit; Divine Sonship; The Witness of the Holy Spirit; Sanctification and Christian Perfection; Self-denial and Following Christ; Christian Duties; Freedom

from Sin through Jesus' Blood; the Difference between true and false Christianity: the Spiritual Declension of the Church; Separation from the World; Putting off the Old and putting on the New Man; and also eschatological subjects, viz: Death, Resurrection, Judgment, Heaven, Hell, etc. They chose their texts accordingly and endeavored to prove every point with appropriate passages of Holy Writ, and thus rivet them upon the consciences of their hearers. They prayed and wrestled with God for light, unction and power, in order to preach the word deep into the hearts and consciences, attended with the demonstration of the Holy Spirit, with great assurance and boldness. This kind of preaching made deep and radical impressions. People saw their wretchedness in sin in the light of God's Word, and the heart-broken sinner was then pointed to the great salvation in Christ. At that time the preachers knew nothing of sketch-books, they did not preach on non-essentials, much less on the events of the day or eccentric themes which awaken superficial sensation, as is only too often the case at the present day. Sin of all kinds and in all its ramifications would be attacked with the intention to destroy these works of the devil and liberate precious souls from Satan's thralldom. Preachers generally lived what they preached; in their pastoral visits and conversations there was no levity, nor foolish talk, nor unseemly conduct prevailing; they would speak to the consciences of the people, exhort and pray with them, by which means many were awakened and converted. They were generally men of God, full of faith and the Holy Ghost, mighty in the Scriptures, and their resulting fruits responded to their spirits and efforts." \* What a grand testimony this is! And yet we can confirm it unhesitatingly as far as our own observation extended during the years 1835-1850.

We add here some recollections given by an eye-witness of those years, in the *Christliche Botschafter* of July 6, 1885, as follows: "They (the Evangelical preachers) penetrated into the truths of the Bible and received them believingly into their own hearts until they were quickened, moved, permeated and filled with them, then they would open the flood-gates upon their audiences, and a stream of light, truth and power, accompanied by suitable Scripture passages, stanzas from hymns, Catechism passages, parables and powerful applications would pour into the congregation, the effects of which were frequently quite extraordinary. Ofttimes a general 'power of repentance' (*Busskraft*) would fall upon the people, causing floods of penitential tears, and many cried to God for the pardon of their sins.

"The preachers were quite plainly but neatly dressed, smoothly shaven, wearing white neckties and white hats; many of them observed a precise,

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\*) It ought to be said here that the applications of discipline to preachers for transgressions, of which we frequently read in this volume, had reference mostly to local preachers.

almost military gait and demeanor, without however, any approach to foppishness. They were men of God and ambassadors for Christ who realized deeply their responsibility toward God and blood-bought souls. Their appearance and demeanor commanded respect.

"In those times the Evangelical preachers went forth to make conquests. Every one was a missionary and endeavored to find an entrance into new sections of the country. And in this matter the presiding elders set a good example, for between the quarterly meetings they were often doing pioneer work. At that time newly converted souls were the crowns and stars which distinguished a preacher. When in 1839 they wanted to elect a Bishop, they did not seek after a man who could by shining talents and eloquence and pulpit demonstrations secure the admirations of the people and represent something great, but they elected the plain, childlike, but very pious, Holy-Ghost-annointed John Seybert, who, in the salvation of souls and the spread of the work had been very successful.

"In 1843, they selected the plain, and in the eyes of the world unknown Joseph Long for Bishop, chiefly because he was, like Apollos, mighty in the Scriptures, so that he had scarcely his equal in that respect, while in self-denial and labor for the Lord he presented a wholesome pattern to the Church.

"The sermons in those times did not make the impression: 'Oh, what a great preacher!' rather 'Oh, what a great sinner I am, and how great is the mercy of God towards me!' God and His Word and grace were glorified, and the preacher, who indeed was beloved and esteemed, vanished before the Sun of Righteousness behind the Cross.

"The wives of preachers were in regard to dress, conduct and influence, such as apostles Paul and Peter required Christian wives to be. Young preachers were intent on winning such wives as should set godly examples to the flock, and walk worthily before the Lord. Generally they were an ornament to the Church, although not by wearing gold and jewelry and appearing in gay, fashionable dress, but being clothed with humility and the virtues of Christ. The preacher's family was to be regulated in accordance with the doctrine of Christ and the promises of the ordination vows."

When the Missionary Society was formed in 1838, there arose a general emulation among old and young to support this good cause. At that time no Woman's Missionary Society was needed to awaken missionary zeal. Men, women and children brought their contributions to the auxiliary societies. There was much saving and self-denial practiced in dress and living, even at the table, and the preachers' families remained not a whit behind. Blooming daughters of preachers dressed still more plainly and savingly, in order to be able to give the more liberally and thereby became more pleasing to God and sensible men.

Secret prayer was diligently practiced. Because Daniel daily prayed

three times in his summer-house, those Evangelicals took this as an example for Christians, and hence it was a strict Evangelical custom to pray three times a day in secret, and in class-meetings it was a point of searching inquiry whether this usage was duly respected; and upon these secret prayers followed public rewards, as the Saviour promised.

The comparatively little flock had also its defects and infirmities—and there were also some exceptions among the good, even as Christ had one among His twelve chosen ones—but their faults were generally not essential ones.

Church Discipline was strictly and faithfully applied to transgressing preachers and members. Fashionable dress and a worldly spirit were not tolerated. In this respect Bishop Seybert's trumpet gave forth a specially clear and ringing tone.

Expulsion from the Church was dreaded as an awful misfortune; the fallen and expelled were regarded as has having been hanged upon the ecclesiastical gibbet; the very word "backslider" caused a shudder, and there was an instinctive feeling of separation from such.

The general motto was: Watching, prayer, battling against sin and Satan, and victory over the world. They sang their choruses with high enthusiasm:

"Ein wahres Christenthum besteht,  
Wann Erd' und Himmel untergeht,  
Ein reines Gold hält aus die Prob',  
Erfüllt die Welt mit Jesu Lob,"

which being transposed into prose would read about thus: "A true religion will stand when earth and heaven pass away; and pure gold will stand the test and fill the world with the praises of Christ."

Again they would sing:

"Sucht ein wahres Christenthum,  
Wer recht kämpfet, soll tragen die Kron'  
Und niedersitzen mit dem Sohn."

That is to say: "Seek ye a true Christianity; he that battles rightly shall wear the crown, and sit down with the Son!"

Those times did indeed demand a true Christianity, in order to bear all the scoffs, crosses and persecutions that befell the Evangelicals from various directions. But "with Jesus in the soul"—as they also often sang—the old Evangelical chorus was heard a thousand times in their meetings:

"'S ist wohl ein wenig Kreuz und Schmach,  
Wir können's aber tragen.  
Singt: Glorie, Hallelujah!"

Another prominent characteristic was the setting of the affections on things above and not on things of the earth, as Paul admonishes, which was often expressed in their popular songs.

They regarded themselves as "pilgrims, strangers and guests" here below, and therefore delighted in singing Gerhard Tersteegen's hymn for spiritual pilgrims, which begins :

"Kommt, Kinder, lasst uns gehen,  
Der Abend kommt herbei."

(Come, children, let us go, for the evening cometh on.)

Or Walter's :

"Kommt, Brüder, kommt, wir eilen fort," etc.  
(Come brethren, come, we hasten on.)

Also Dreisbach's translations :

"We are traveling home to heaven above," etc.  
(Wir reisen heim zum Himmel fort.)

And

"Come on, my partners in distress," etc.  
(Kommt fort, Gesellen in Trübsal.)

And frequently the following chorus was sung like a marching hymn :

"O seid im Ernst, o seid im Ernst!  
Wir reisen nach der Ewigkeit!"  
(Oh, be in earnest, oh, be in earnest!  
We're traveling to eternity!)

And many more of the same sort.

A lively worship was highly appreciated. The preaching was to be full of "power," the "praises of God" must be heard from the "children of God" besides the cries of penitents; and at campmeetings a "shout in the camp of King Emmanuel," was expected to take place. In short, no one was satisfied without "victory" in preaching and in the exercises. No one, perhaps, would enjoy this more than Bishop Seybert, whose "O, seliges Leben!" (Oh, blessed life!) will never be forgotten by those who heard him start this, his favorite chorus.

But it can not be denied that there was at times considerable smoke—something merely human—mixed with the fire. But fire, the real fire of the Holy Spirit and the powerful presence of God, was also burning and sometimes intensely consuming among "these people," so that sinners fell down and confessed that God was there.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was held in very high esteem, and this characteristic reminds one strongly of the primitive Christian Church who held the eucharist much more sacred and important than has been the case in later times.

It was then a custom to keep the Friday previous to the quarterly meeting as a day of fasting and prayer, in order to get into a proper frame of mind for the following sacramental Sunday, and this was generally observed. (How is it now?) The Quarterly Conference, which was usually held on Saturday forenoon had for its object to ascertain whether all the officers and members of the congregation had conducted themselves as

Christians, so that they might be admitted as worthy guests to the Lord's Supper. On Saturday afternoon and frequently also on Sunday morning the presiding elder would deliver a "sermon for Christians," in which Christian experience, life and duties were described clearly and keen practical applications made. Frequently also a sacramental sermon was preached, mostly, however, a short "preparatory address" was delivered just before the distribution of the bread and wine took place, in which the nature and object of the sacrament was explained and both the worthy and unworthy characters were described, closing with an impressive exhortation to a sincere self-examination. With deep humiliation before God and a serious state of mind the elements would then be distributed and received when oftentimes tears of penitence or joy would flow in abundance. At camp-meetings this solemn transaction usually took place on Friday morning as the last day of the meeting; and this sacrament was so highly honored that the friends would appear attired in their clean Sunday clothes, and the sisters, as far as was convenient, clothed in white apparel. If a presiding elder or officiating minister would have ventured to have the Lord's Supper administered without any special presentation of the subject in his sermon or address and without earnest admonition to self-examination, it would have been held as as a blasphemous disregard of the sacredness of this institution, and would have been followed by some very tangible reproof. Whosoever will properly examine and appreciate this holy mystery, in accordance with our 16th article of faith, will agree with us that this high appreciation of the Lord's Supper by the "old Evangelicals" deserves our hearty, favorable recognition. If the time should ever come that this Church treats this sacrament, which is so dear to the Lord Himself, lightly and superficially, it will be a sure indication of spiritual declension and lukewarmness toward Christ Himself.

Another prominent feature was a "fervent brotherly love." Hated and persecuted by the "unconverted world," this "bond of perfectness" united them most intimately. The preachers had the welfare and salvation of the congregations very closely at heart, and lovingly endeavored to "lead them on to that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord," a mode of expression which Bishop Joseph Long often used. For this reason the presiding elders preached at quarterly and camp-meetings, at least one "sharp sermon" in which "Jerusalem was searched through with lanterns," which also was an Evangelical proverb. No Agag would then be spared. They were striving like Paul, to "present to Christ a chaste virgin." At camp-meetings, which usually commenced on Monday evening, it was customary on Tuesday morning to "commence judgment at the house of God," when also the preachers present would get their proper portion. The presiding elders: John Dreisbach, Henry Nebel, John G. Zinser, Thomas Buck, John Seybert, John P. Leib, Henry Fischer, Francis Hoffmann, Samuel Baumgartner,

Absalom B. Schafer and others, knew very well how to handle the "Sword of the Spirit" on such occasions. Many of those close-cutting sermons are unforgettable. It was then generally recognized that such sermons were very wholesome; they were highly appreciated, and whoever found himself "hit" by them would usually humble himself under the authority of the Word of God, and confirm it by inward and outward submission to it, which was followed by blessed results.

The members esteemed the preachers "highly, for their work's sake." The great self-denial, severe conflicts and labors as also the unctuous sermons and wholesome soul-food which these servants of the Lord set before God's household, were greatly appreciated. And as the preachers on most circuits could make their round of appointments only in from two to four weeks time, the people became very hungry for the word of life. The preacher was regarded as a servant of the Lord, as a captain in the holy spiritual war, a steward of the mysteries of God, and a true pastor and shepherd of souls, and he was treated accordingly. His arrival at the place of appointment was eagerly looked for, the family which he entered felt itself highly honored thereby. He was entertained, as Paul says to the Galatians: "As an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus." It was considered a high honor to entertain the man of God, to feed his horse and cleanse his shoes. The house was cleansed on his account before he arrived, rye-bread had to give way to the finest wheat-bread, he had to sleep in the best bed; yet all this, and much more besides, without going into extravagance. The Marys would out of love break the alabaster boxes of precious ointments upon their heads (figuratively speaking), when these ambassadors for Christ stopped with them.

At that time the preachers could stay only two years on a field of labor and not unfrequently the exigencies of the work necessitated an annual change; the conference districts extended over great distances and the work was very severe, hence, it was quite uncertain at the close of the year whether the preacher and friends would see each other again in this life, therefore it became customary to preach farewell sermons on the last round on the circuit, similar to the one Paul held at Miletus; usually the emotions and utterances were like those at that farewell meeting. But when the preacher, at the close of his sermon, declared that he was determined by the grace of God, in spite of tribulations, hardships and adversities, to be faithful until he had finished his course and received the crown in the kingdom of glory and proposed to the audience, that each one who would meet him there should lift up his right hand, immediately the hands would go up, floods of tears burst forth, and deeply moved souls would give vent to their feelings, while they felt as if their heartstrings would be torn asunder. Sometimes the emotions would utter themselves also in shouts of praise at the prospect of a happy re-union in the better world.

The chief comfort amidst these painful feelings was the deeply rooted conviction that God in His overruling providence would through the Conference again send the right man for the work, and for this the members hoped and looked in all seriousness in their secret and public prayers, steadfastly believing that the work was the Lord's, and the preachers His servants, who were under His guidance. And who would venture to deny that such a mind, such faith, such prayer and expectation, with a corresponding practice, exist where the Lord Jesus Christ Himself governs the Church?

It will be quite interesting to the reader to see several extracts from a letter written by Father John J. Kopp, descriptive of some features of the work in his time. Bro. Kopp entered the ranks of the itinerant ministry in 1832, and was during many years a courageous pioneer, a faithful and successful co-laborer in the work. He describes the manner of working, etc., during the last described period, by saying:

"We preachers endeavored to become very useful to our hearers for their salvation, therefore we studied our texts and prayed much in secret for divine help. We also practiced fasting and abstinence. At first we fasted every Friday, later on every quarter, namely on the Friday before Quarterly Meeting, and fasting was also enjoined upon the members. When the friends gathered for worship, they came in a prayerful spirit and devotional frame of mind, and in the meeting they did not look about much; they collected their thoughts and gave attention to the Word of God. The preachers declared the whole counsel of God, sinners were called to repentance and Christians were urged to practice earnestness, honesty and faithfulness in the service of the Lord. The foolish fashions of a vain world, especially in the matter of dress, were not softly dealt with, but cleanliness and propriety were enjoined by precept and example.

"The young people did not stay in the background in the meetings either, they took positions in front, singing and praying most heartily. We always strove for 'victory' in preaching. An old preacher told me once that at a certain time he did not get help in secret prayer—as it seemed to him—and when he arose before the assembled congregation to commence his sermon he thought he must now be put to shame, but then the answer to his secret prayers came in a public manner, so that both he and the congregation were richly blessed. When in those years a preacher lacked unction in preaching, some one would pull at his coat as a token that he should give way to some other one. And in all things we were concerned that all the glory should be given to God.

"In making pastoral visits we questioned old and young as to the conditions of their souls, and especially professors as to how they were progressing spiritually; thereat the Lord frequently opened the hearts of the people. and when we then closed our interviews with prayer, great good was the result. We always delighted to converse with the old mem-

bers about the primitive times of the Church who could relate many interesting historical facts of what the Lord had done for them years ago. Once I and Bro. Henry Niebel abode over night with Father Dreisbach, when he showed us a paper, upon which stood a list of their appointments in olden times, and while he was reading the names Niebel said, 'That one is dead, and this one is dead—oh, how short is our allotted lifetime.' This was a solemn interview."

Another remarkable feature of the spiritual and ecclesiastical life from the beginning was the strong conviction that the office of the ministry was conditioned upon a personal, direct and clear divine call, and that this call pre-supposed that the respective person be a truly saved one, and was under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The divine prerogative to call men into the great harvest was fully recognized, in accordance with Isaiah 41, 27: "I will give unto Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings," and Acts 20, 28, where Paul said to the elders at Ephesus, that "the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God."

They remembered the example of Mr. Albright, in whose case the divine call was the moving force, and that in this respect the Evangelical Association was founded upon this important truth. And as a matter of fact the fathers in the ministry, such as George Miller, John Dreisbach, John Seybert regarded it as absolutely essential to be assured of this divine call. All of the Evangelical fathers held fast to this cardinal point. This subject was frequently dwelt upon in preaching, and it was insisted upon that God would by the light of His Spirit, reveal to the men whom He had chosen the fact of such choice whilst they were walking in the light and followed Him faithfully, He would incline their hearts toward this work, and induce a willingness to bear all the crosses and trials that might be connected with it, especially in those trying times. A fervent love for souls would also accompany this call, so that one could say with Paul: "The love of Christ constraineth us" (2 Cor. 5, 14); and these inward movings would manifest themselves more or less in their conduct and efforts in divine worship, such as prayers, confessions, exhortations, etc., evincing an unusual degree of humility, fervency and unction. Thus the Church would, while walking in the light, become impressed mediately and immediately that the Lord was calling such an one into His vineyard, and would be moved to do her part in sending him forth into the work. At the same time they would earnestly deprecate the running of one's own accord without having been sent, thus seeking the office instead of souls, and the official honors instead of "the crown of glory that fadeth not away," and would earnestly protest against all selfish and fanatical striving for the possession of this important and sacred office.

The idea that a man might for himself select this holy office, as he makes choice of a trade or profession, or that others, for instance, his parents or friends, could designate him to be a preacher of the Gospel,

was utterly foreign to their minds. Just as strange was the thought that natural eloquence, gracefulness, or learning were sufficient to indicate the divine call. And the sophistical sentiment, because the father was a preacher his son ought to be one too, found no favor in the old Evangelical times. With Paul they held that this office was a divine calling, that the message to be delivered was "the testimony of God" and the preacher a "co-worker with God," and thus the whole of it was the work of God. Thus the minister of the Gospel appeared to them indeed "a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ" and not of man, and hence he was privileged to stand forth in the name of his Divine Master and proclaim the whole counsel of God without respect of persons. To such the Word of Christ was applicable: "But he that entereth by the door is the shepard of the sheep, to him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice." But to such as would "run" of their own accord, or were called by men only, they applied the word of the Lord: "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." (John 10, 1.) Who can deny that those spiritual thieves and murderers and ravenous wolves in sheep's clothing, who have brought false doctrines, worldliness and depravity into the Church, always were such as ran without being sent by the Lord?

Another noble characteristic of the work must not be overlooked. As we have seen from the foregoing pages the Lord commenced this blessed work through the instrumentality of German Pennsylvanians, among those Germans. Until the year 1823, the ministry consisted exclusively of German Pennsylvanians excepting of a few who were of English descent. The Pennsylvanians generally, although being radically German themselves, cherished a strong antipathy against the European Germans; they had become so thoroughly Americanized that they designated an European immigrant somewhat contemptuously as a "German," even as a "green German." And with not a few this antipathy had been developed into disgust and hatred, because in those early years it was still remembered that Hessians, Anspachians, Baireuthians, etc., fought in the Revolutionary War in the ranks of the British against Washington and his patriotic army, in which were also German regiments from eastern Pennsylvania, struggling for liberty. But the work of conversion was so deep and radical as to dispel these clannish feelings from the hearts of the converted. Thus when in 1823 John C. Reisner, and somewhat later on John G. Zinser, John J. Kopp, Christian Hummel, Jacob Vogelbach, Frederick Kreckler, Michael Eis, William Münz, John M. Sindlinger, Christian Holl, Philip Schwilly, William Schmidt, Henry Stetzel, Christian Meyers, John J. Escher and many other Europeans until the year 1850, entered into the ranks of the ministry, there was no manifestation of this prejudice known or seen among preachers and members, nor did any factional feeling prevail against the American brethren. The preachers

esteemed themselves mutually as servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. The heavenly call to the ministry and the divine blessing upon the labors of the brethren were considered paramount and decisive in this matter. The offices of the Church were accessible to Americans and Europeans alike; when elections took place the controlling question was: "Who is sufficient for these things?" Nor was there any Corinthian party-spirit prevailing among the members. And the Lord of the Church prepared the Association, almost unnoticed by themselves, to co-operate in the future with others in saving the hundreds of thousands of fresh immigrants that came to our shores since 1825 and pressed into the great West, which was rapidly opened for settlement. Meanwhile the brethren were also being led into the English field, and the call of the Evangelical Association began by the leadings of Providence to assume more of a *cosmopolitan* character, in accordance with the great commission given by the Lord of all: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Toward the close of the last described period, the sending of missionaries into Europe and to the heathen was already under earnest contemplation.

In view of all the foregoing facts the serious lover of the cause of God cannot repress the devout wish that the Evangelical Association with her splendid organization and well adapted arrangements for the prosecution of the work, which now form an almost perfect machinery, might never lose the burning zeal for sound conversions, inward and outward holiness, self-denial, separation from worldliness and all its "pomp and vain glory" — as was promised in baptism and frequently afterward — conscientious administration of discipline and dread of lukewarmness and apostasy, that permeated and governed the connection in its primitive periods, but grow more intense and all-pervading!

This depends chiefly upon the ministry. Bishop Seybert frequently expressed this great truth in the following words: "So long as our ministry is right, lives right, preaches right, and rightly applies discipline, so long the Association will remain right; for with the ministry the Church will stand or fall."

## Addenda.

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### I.

The report of the signing of names to the proceedings of the General Conferences of 1820 and 1826 is omitted in this history, because those sessions were held jointly with the sessions of the Annual Conference of those years. The original Conference record does not distinguish between the transactions of the Annual and General Conferences, and we have no means of ascertaining positively in every case who was entitled to sit in General Conference and sign her proceedings, nor whether they were signed separately from those of the Annual Conference.

### II.

The careful reader may notice that this English edition of the Evangelical history is not an exact translation from the German. It was found that some of the foot-notes in the German volume could quite properly be incorporated into the text-matter of this work. So also has the appendix ("Nachtraegliches") in the German largely been wrought into the text of this volume, which had been impossible in the German because then most of the respective items came to hand only when the electrotypes plates had already been made.

### III.

The histories of the work in Canada, the Publishing House, *Der Christliche Botschafter* and the *Evangelical Messenger* have been extended beyond 1850, even up to the present time, because they could not well be divided, and the reader will be pleased thus to obtain a comprehensive view of these separate parts of the work.

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